A POLITICAL AND CULTURAL

HISTORY OF INDIA

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A POLITICAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY OF INDIA

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

SECTION I. THE GEOGRAPHICAL FACTOR

Geography and History. The physical environment is an important factor in human evolution, but its influence has been largely overcome by the astounding progress of man's mental activity. Still the conquest of Nature by Science has its limitations, and even today the geographical factor is not negligible. The raw materials of commerce can be created only to some extent, and mineral resources are discovered, not invented. To the extent that the geographical features of a country cannot be modified, human action is conditioned by them. Therefore Geography and Topography, or local Geography, are auxiliary studies to the historian and to the makers of history. Kalhana and Sivaji were experts in Topography and Geography. The term history refers not only to the recorded events, but also to the chronicle of events. Anthropo-geography, or human Geography, is the study of the influence of geographical factors on human behaviour. History is no doubt modified by such factors, but non-geographical forces are more vital to the historical process. Though the racial element is to some extent the offspring of accumulated geographical influences, its separateness from the geographical element is generally recognised. It is a factor frequently hard to analyse. The exaggerations of Nazi racial theorists have produced a reaction—the race-myth. Besides geographical and racial factors, there is a third factor which may be called broadly social. Its operation may be local, national or international. Our activity is now and then stimulated or repressed by the

conduct of other peoples. In other words, we arrive at the apparently redundant dictum that history is influenced by history. A conspicuous case in point is the renaissance of the Orient today, influenced not only by the long-standing imperialism of the West, but also by the amazing ascent of Japan to power in this century.

India, the Asiatic Italy. India has been called the Asiatic Italy. Geographically the comparison is not inappropriate. The Himalayas correspond to the Alps, and in both countries the North-West frontier is more vulnerable than the North-East frontier. Father Po and Mother Ganges have caused the fecundity of the great plains and made them the prey of foreign aggressors. In one sense, the history of Italy and India is the story of their ravishers. Though the configuration of the Apennines and the Vindhyas is different, continental and peninsular divisions have resulted in both cases. The eastern river basins of South India are analogous to the plains of Etruria, Latium and Campania. The broken coast from Cumae to Tarentum is somewhat similar to the Malabar and Coromandel coasts. Ceylon is our Sicily. Italy and India occupy a middle position in the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean respectively, and the Tuscan and Adriatic Seas remind us of the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal. Both countries are largely agricultural and have in the course of ages frequently recovered rapidly from the bites of the dogs of war and pestilence. Both have been predominantly continental powers, the naval arm in either case growing artificially to meet emergencies. Italy has been the torch-bearer of European civilization, and India the beacon of Asiatic culture. But there has been no Indian Rome occupying a central position and radiating its influence at home and abroad. Though Vijayanagar was called the Indian Rome by a foreign observer of the 16th century A.D., its ascendancy was confined to a part of India, and its influence was not as extensive and far-reaching as that of ancient Rome.

Mountains The Himalayas shelter India not only from the North winds but also from invaders directly from the North They modify the climate of Northern India and constitute an insuperable barrier to intercourse with China, from which our country is isolated on the land side. They give life to the three great rivers and supply us with many articles of consumption Their inaccessible heights now stimulate the ambition of man to conquer them, but for ages they have had no such effect, they have only provided a home for Siva and Parvati. The Himalayan states have lived in a condition of isolation and stagnation, Kashmir alone playing a great part in the annals of culture and a limited role in imperial politics The Vindhyas have practically separated South India from the North and acted as a barrier, to a great extent, to close relations between the two fundamental geographical divisions of this country The overflow of Northern and Southern imperialism on either side has been exceptional and short-lived. South India has consequently obtained comparative immunity from the political storms overwhelming Northern India. The Western and Eastern Ghats enclose the triangular plateau and demarcate it clearly from the narrow West Coast and the broad East Coast The slope of the plateau from the West to the East has determined the direction of the rivers and given rise to the great deltas of the East Coast The mountains and impenetrable forests have contributed to the variety of cultural levels in India Though they have provided us with some materials for imperial and intellectual progress, they have directly acted in a contrary direction

Rivers and Plains The growth of civilization in riverine regions is characteristic of Indian History The river Sindhu (Indus) has given its name to the Hindus (a variant of Sindhus), to the small river Sindh, and to the province of Sindh A people battling with Nature for the satisfaction of their creature comforts cannot rise high in civilization A comfortable life of leisure enables man to

think of the problems of life other than those of mere existence. Therefore "the good life" is possible only in rich or imperial states. The productivity of extensive plains watered by large rivers, or of the alluvial deltas of rivers, stimulates the progress of political integration and of culture. Accordingly the Indo-Gangetic plain has been the great imperial and intellectual centre throughout our history. The Mahanadi, Godavari, Krishna, Kaveri, Vaigai and Tamraparani deltas have played a conspicuous part in South Indian history. The less extensive plains of the West Coast nourished comparatively petty princes. The Marathā dominion in the 17th and 18th centuries A.D., founded on inadequate inherent resources, had to be fed with plunder. The plain regions alone can bear the cost of empire and civilization. But while they advance material prosperity and acculturation, they are inimical to republicanism and local autonomy. The Sakya mountain-republic produced the Buddha, the great democrat of the 6th century B.C., but gradually the monarchical states, built on rich foundations, killed the republican tradition, just as the great city-states of ancient Greece were overthrown by the territorial monarchy of Macedonia under Philip II and Alexander the Great. The political value of rivers as boundaries and their commercial importance in proportion to their navigability cannot be overlooked. The Krishna-Tungabhadra frontier played an important part in ancient and mediaeval Indian History. The great capitals of famous dynasties—Pataliputra, Kanauj, Delhi, Kanchi, Tanjore, Uraiyur and Madura—are situated in the plains, the conspicuous exception being Vijayanagar. The great Indian desert in the past added to the defensive resources of Northern India and, to some extent, separated the Indus valley from the rest of the country.

Coasts and Climate. The coast line of India is comparatively unbroken, and indigenous naval powers have been few and far between, in spite of continuous seaborne trade with foreign countries, the great exceptions

being the Cholas, the Cheras, and to a limited extent, the Marathas. Though climate is the resultant of a variety of factors, its elevation to the rank of the sole great geographical factor is hard to appreciate, and the partial geographical explanation of history becomes still more partial owing to the intrusion of climatological monism. The tropical climate of India is prejudicial to sustained effort, but can bear hard only on the people of other climes. The ferocious invaders of India were tamed by the tropical sun, but their degeneracy in due course was largely due to other factors. India, on the eve of her great failure towards the close of the 12th century A.D., was not lacking in virility or heroism. In other words, the climatic effects can be modified to a great extent by calculated human endeavours. Our indifference to politics and our limited essays at constitutionalism are explained sometimes with reference to our climate. Some would attribute our great achievements in many fields to our grand geographical features But our triumphs as well as our blunders are truly Himalayan, and emphasis on such superficial correlations serves no serious purpose.

SECTION II. RACIAL AND LINGUISTIC UNITS

Theory of Seven Physical Types. Seven physical types have been distinguished among the people of India today, and the picture presented is that of an ethnological museum: Indo-Aryan in Kashmir, the Panjab and Rajputana; Dravidian in Madras, Haidarabad, the Central Provinces, Chota Nagpur and Central India; Mongolian in Burma, Nepal and Assam; Aryo-Dravidian in the United Provinces and Bihar; Mongolo-Dravidian in Bengal and Orissa; Scytho-Dravidian in Maharashtra; and Turko-Iranian in Baluchistan and the North-West borderland. This classification is based on careful measurements of the head and nose and on physical characters like stature and pigmentation. It shows the effects of the foreign invasions of India in making her people composite, and throws light on the past in the light of the present. But it is a

rough scheme indicative merely of the predominant element in each type. The names of the types have been suggested by certain speculative views on racial origins. The term Dravidian is regarded as a damned heritage of ethnology from philology, and objection is taken to the dictum that language is a test of race. Though the argument from language to race is not necessarily valid, to say that it is necessarily invalid is untenable. The word Dravidian is another form of the word Tamil, applied to the linguistic family consisting of Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and a few other languages. This conception of linguistic unity has given rise to the idea of the racial unity of those speaking the above-mentioned languages. Further, the alleged Scythian and Mongolian elements in the racial composition of the Marathas and the Bengalis respectively have been called in question. Moreover, the classification under survey says nothing about the pre-Dravidian and proto-Dravidian elements so much emphasised in recent research. Some doubt the stability of physical characters and draw pointed attention to the artificial constriction of the hip and the flattening of the nose practised by some peoples. But physical characters like head formation are comparatively stable and form the basis for anthropometrical study. Therefore it is going too far to reject that basis and deny the composite character of the Indian population. Broadly speaking, three elements may be recognised: pre-Dravidian, represented by the hill and forest tribes; Dravidian, the common type; and Indo-Aryan, the fair type.

Aryan and Dravidian Languages. The three chief linguistic families of India are Aryan, Dravidian and Munda, the last principally in Orissa. South Indian languages, including Gond but excluding Marathi, along with the tongue of the Brahui of Baluchistan, belong to the second family. Sanskrit and the vernaculars of Northern India together with Marathi come under the first designation. This linguistic differentiation supports

the theory of Dravidian and Aryan invasions of India. Regarding the origin of the Dravidians there are various theories—Tibetan, Central Asian, Mesopotamian and Egyptian—, while a few scholars are opposed to any theory of their foreign origin, though this theory is broadly supported by the language of the Brahui tribe of Baluchistan, possessing affinities with the Dravidian languages of South India. The general tendency of scholars is to regard the Dravidians, not as autochthons or children of the soil, but as foreigners, probably of the Mediterranean race, who came to this country about the beginning of the New Stone Age*

SECTION III. PERIODS OF INDIAN HISTORY

Conventional Periods. The conventional division of Indian History into the Hindu, Muslim and British periods is criticised as superficial and unsatisfactory. But the principle of calling a historical period after the name of the paramount power is convenient and reasonable, provided the limitations of the label are understood The Hindu period may be brought to a close, not with the Arab conquest of Sindh or with the innumerable raids and limited Indian conquests of Mahmud of Ghazni, but with the final success of Muhammad of Ghor in the last decade of the 12th century A D The practical end of the Muslim period synchronised with the crowning triumph of the Marathas over Aurangzib about 1700. Though the 18th century witnessed the phenomenal ascendancy of the Marathas till 1772, that century closed with the assertion of the British supremacy by Wellesley, and may be regarded in a sense as that of the British, seeing that the amalgamation of their East India Companies into a United Company in 1708 was the starting point of their effective progress in India. Just as the Muslim period does not really begin with the Arab intrusion into Sindh, the British period does not start with the foundation of their

* V Rangacharya, *History of Pre Musalman India*, I (1929), pp. 69–89

East India Company in 1600. In South India, the Muslim period which commences a century later than in Northern India has a different significance; the empire of Vijayanagar and the rise of the Marathas substantially modified the ascendancy of Islam. In a sense, there is no Muslim period of South Indian History. In spite of the limitations of the triple division of Indian History into the Hindu, Muslim and British periods, it is the best available.

Another Division. The significance of the division into Ancient, Mediaeval and Modern for European History is evident; the 5th century A.D. closing the epoch of classical antiquity and ushering in a period of comparative stagnation and darkness which was ended by the new intellectual forces of the 16th century. It is profitless to adopt the same limits for the Ancient, Mediaeval and Modern periods of Indian History. There is much difference of opinion among scholars as to the lower limit of the first period; A.D. 100, 300, 600, 647, 900 and 1200 have been adopted by different writers. As characteristic changes in Indian life should constitute the basis of the division, the establishment of the Muslim power in India may be regarded as marking off the Ancient from the Mediaeval period, and that of the British authority, the Mediaeval from the Modern period. Thus, if the division into periods is made on the lines indicated above, it is in general agreement with the conventional triple division. Therefore we may divide Indian History into three periods as follows: the first to A.D. 1200; the second from 1200 to 1700; and the third from 1700 to the present day.

Sub-Periods. The sub-division of each period presents difficulties; to base it on a century, three centuries or five centuries, undivorced from historical considerations, is to some extent desirable. To separate the history of Northern India from that of the South is in a certain degree necessary. To divide Indian History into three parts—Northern India, the Dakhan and the Far South—

is not quite satisfactory, because of the substantial unity of South Indian History. Some would distinguish the Dakhan from South India and take the latter as identical with the Tamil country. But the term Dakhan, short for the Greek corruption of *Dakshinapatha*, may be taken as analogous to *Uttarapatha*, applied to Northern India, distinct from *Uttara* beyond the Himalayas. Still it is better to regard South India as identical with Peninsular India or cis-Vindhyan India, consisting of the Marâtha, Telugu, Kannada, Tamil and Malayalam areas, while retaining the conventional denotation of the Dakhan.

SECTION IV. ANNALS OF POLITICS AND CULTURE

The Thucydidean Tradition. We are far from the days of Freeman when history could be treated from the purely political point of view. Yet the Thucydidean tradition dies hard. To make history co-extensive with human life in all its aspects is to increase its scope to an embarrassing extent. Still a general history of India should give sufficient attention to the various sides of human activity, political, religious, economic, social and intellectual. Its dominant note however has to be political, though in order to understand the activity of the state in war and peace, its influence on life as a whole is to be appraised, as well as the variety of influences exerted upon it. In the case of men of letters, their influence on government is markedly less than their subordination to its influence. Further, in general histories the annals of culture usually degenerate into a catalogue of authors, books and buildings. Therefore the blend of the history of politics and culture should not destroy the interest of the former or the distinctness of the picture of the latter. Instead of making the annals of culture complete and dryasdust, it is better to concentrate on major items and greater luminaries To dissociate cultural progress from dynastic and chronological history is to overlook its historical setting. Some detest political history as bloody,

ugly and unedifying and expatiate on the beauty of social and cultural annals. But life is one and indivisible, and human character does not exhibit itself differently in different compartments of life. We cannot afford to overlook the dictum of Kautilya that vital cultural progress and healthy social life depend fundamentally on political advance.

SECTION V. SOME MISCONCEPTIONS

The Matsya and Sundopasunda Nyayas. *Matsyanyaya*, or the rule of the big fish swallowing the small, is said to be exemplified in Indian History. Kautilya regards it as the result of the lack of governance characteristic of the supposed pre-political stage of human society. The same rule prevailed in the field of inter-state relations as well. Political integration on imperial lines would operate as *matsyanyaya*. The holiness ascribed to *digvijayas* (conquests of the world) could not conceal their unscrupulous pursuit. Similarly the *Sundopasundanyaya*, or the rule of Sunda and Upasunda (two Rakshasa brothers fighting unto death—war of attrition), operated and resulted in mutual slaughter and exhaustion, from the Mahabharata war to the conquest of India by Islam. But the rule of the bully and of Kilkenny cats is of universal application, and the misconception in question consists in seeking for its special application in Indian History. Nor was anarchy introduced in consequence of such conflicts. Every schoolboy knows that India is as large as Europe *minus* Russia, and if Indian History is the history of anarchical autonomy till the Muslim advent, European History may be described in the same terms, and ancient Greek History would be the history of anarchy *par excellence*. The world is now "a whispering gallery," and thinking internationally is the fashion of the day, but in ancient and mediaeval times, communal, local and provincial patriotism was hard to conquer. It is improper to treat the sub-continent of India as a single political unit, and describe its division into a number of political

units as a sign of degeneracy or political debility The establishment of the *Pax Indica* by the Mauryas is an astonishing performance regard being had to the extent of their empire and the efficiency of its administrative system Some dismiss our provincial history as of purely local importance True from the all India point of view but not if we take into consideration the extent of territory or the numerical strength of the population concerned European History treated on the same lines would dwindle into the history of Caesarism or Napoleonism

The Unity of India. In spite of the existence of many political units and their ruinous clashes the real unity of India—her cultural homogeneity—has been built up in the course of ages Indian empires have been of the hegemony type and the unity of India as a whole till recently has not been political or administrative The caste system cuts at the root of social solidarity The racial and linguistic differences though greatly exaggerated are real The forest of faiths called Hinduism is not a centripetal force to any large extent The remarkable unity of India is due to the common outlook of her people on life and to their common heritage This essential unity belies the conception of anarchical autonomy which is further refuted by the grand certificates of merit awarded to Indians by foreigners from Megasthenes to Sir Thomas Munro It is futile to apply to our ancient annals Gibbon's one sided definition of history as "little more than the register of the crimes follies and misfortunes of mankind" We can today speak of the people of India but not of Europe in the same sense

The Kritayuga Mentality Another series of misconceptions arises from the human tendency to exalt the past and belittle the present The less we know about the past the more we draw from our imagination and historians usurp the function of the makers of history We are too critical with regard to our contemporaries and under critical or uncritical about the distant past The

benefit of the doubt is given to antiquity with a vengeance, and frequently no news is understood as good news. Moreover, religion intervenes, and there is nothing that is not religious from the Indian point of view. Even Kautilya is fully vindicated, and his partial condemnation is resented as an undeserved attack on a great Sastrakara, some scholars dilating on the conformity of the *Arthasastra* to the *Dharmasastra,* because the word *moksha* or salvation is mouthed by the Arthasastrakara. When we come to our triad of Acharyas, it is regarded as impertinent to criticise them from the historical point of view. The result of this attitude towards our ancients is that we become *prasastikaras* or panegyrists, soaked in double-distilled piety. Polybius, the Greek historian of ancient Rome, lays down the dictum that " to admit the possibility of a miracle is to annihilate the possibility of history." The historical method is the rational method applied to the determination of human probabilities, and the historian can regard documents like the *Vedas* only as human records and the great Rishis or saints and the famous Bhashyakaras or commentators only as men though of the extraordinary type. To regard them as impeccable and divine is to abdicate the function of the historian. The other side of the medal cannot be overlooked by the critical student of history, who shoud bear in mind the saying of Ranke that he was a historian first, a Christian next.

SECTION VI. SOURCES AND CHRONOLOGY

Character of the Sources. The authorities for the three periods of Indian History are different in character and extent, and as regards the period prior to the advent of Islam which produced a bumper crop of genuine historical literature, the task of the historian is difficult as he is confronted with the paucity of historical raw materials, and sometimes he has to hunt for a pin in the hay-stack. The sources of Indian History to A.D. 1200 are much more varied

than for the subsequent periods, and a collation of diverse authorities is necessary for portraying a picture, frequently fragmentary Further, the sources are in many languages and scripts, Indian and non Indian Therefore the historian of Pre-Muslim India is faced with peculiar difficulties, he has to be a multi linguist proficient in textual criticism, and a specialist in Epigraphy, Numismatics and other allied subjects The distance between Vedic Sanskrit and Classical Sanskrit is greater than that between Chaucer's English and Shakespeare's The Prakrits are numerous and Pali is their literary form Tamil has an ancient grammar and literature Foreign literature is chiefly in Greek, Latin, Tibetan, Chinese and Arabic With the later evolution of the vernaculars other than Tamil, the field of the historian becomes much enlarged

Classification The multifarious authorities may be divided primarily into indigenous and foreign with their distinctive merits and shortcomings The indigenous authors generally write with full knowledge born of their contact with the country and the makers of its history, but sometimes give one-sided and distorted accounts owing to their insular outlook and prejudices The foreigners with their limited equipment for the task, now and then record their superficial and wrong impressions, but, thanks to their different view points, come to our rescue where indigenous writers disappoint us On the whole, foreign evidence is a necessary supplement and corrective to indigenous testimony, though occasionally it dominates the field of Indian historiography

Literature The two fundamental divisions into indigenous and foreign may be sub-divided into literary, epigraphical, numismatic and archaeological or monumental, though foreign sources are chiefly literary except for the history of Greater India The indigenous literary material may be treated from three points of view according to its conformity, comparatively full or

partial, or non-conformity to historiographical needs—historical, quasi-historical and non-historical. Indian traditions, Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jain, constitute our semi-historical data. There is much valuable historical information in non-historical works like the *Mahabhashya* of Patanjali and the *Samhita* of Gargi, besides the geographical data of the *Raghuvamsa* of Kalidasa, the *Dasakumaracharita* of Dandin, and the *Kavyamimamsa* of Rajasekhara. The three lines of Indian historical tradition, to some extent independent of one other, are incorporated in the scriptural and non-scriptural texts of the Brahmanists, Buddhists and Jains, in the *Puranas* and *Itihasas* (epics), and in dramas like the *Mudrarakshasa* of Visakhadatta and the *Malavikagnimitra* of Kalidasa. Professedly and really historical works are the *Arthasastra* of Kautilya and the *Rajatarangini* of Kalhana, and compositions like the *Harshacharita* of Bana and the *Vikramankacharita* of Bilhana may be regarded as defectively historical rather than semi-historical. Though the literary and historical materials are not scanty—they are the historian's mainstay when better evidences are not available—, they are particularly defective from the point of view of political history and chronology. The much-regretted absence of an Indian Thucydides is questioned with aid of Kalhana. Though his supremacy among ancient Indian historians is undisputed, he is not much valuable for the general history of India. He lived in the period of Muslim influence; he is an exception pointing out the rule. The extraordinary richness of Sanskrit literature is not found in its historical branch. This patent defect is to be admitted rather than explained away. It is difficult to account for this gap in the Hindu genius, and we can only oppose questions to questions. Why was there no Indian Aeschylus? Was there a Greek Panini? Did ancient Rome produce a Thucydides in the palmy days of the Republic? Polybius, the great historian of Rome, was a Greek.

Epigraphy. Epigraphy is the study of epigraphs or inscriptions, writings mostly on stone (rocks, pillars and boulders) and copper plates, recording donations to individuals and institutions, commemorating foundations and endowments, and announcing the activities, political, religious, etc, of kings and other persons, official and non-official. Hence their classification into historical, religious, donative and commemorative records. There are public and private records sometimes inscribed on sheets of metal other than copper Inscriptions generally go beyond the immediate purpose of their composition, and contain all kinds of valuable information, genealogical, geographical, administrative, economic and cultural The historical value of inscriptions in general should not be deduced from exceptional documents like those of Asoka, Kharavela, Rudradaman I, Samudragupta and Yasodharman of Malwa These are *sui generis*, especially Asoka's "sermons in stone" The historical introductions to Chola inscriptions, and the epigraphs bearing on Chola administration are another series of exceptional records. Generally inscriptions are dated in Saka or Vikrama years, or in regnal years, occasionally in the years of the Kaliyuga era Most of them are contemporary and free from textual corruptions Though forgeries occur now and then in land grants, inscriptions relieve us from the oppressive generalities and lack of chronology characteristic of the literary materials. But usually the information supplied is fragmentary and jejune It is only in a few cases that inscriptions constitute the mainstay of the historian Frequently the dry bones of history alone are available Hence the unattractiveness of many dynastic histories No doubt inscriptions have brought to our knowledge the existence of dynasties unrevealed by the other sources, but in many cases they have not enabled us to form correct judgments of men and things For the period before Asoka we have no indigenous epigraphs and for Hasha this source is not much One serious mistake is to be indulgent towards

epigraphical *prasastis* and critical as regards literary eulogies. Inscriptions claim victories on behalf of kings which are contradicted by counter-claims in other records of the same kind. Even the high-minded Harsha did not admit his defeat by Pulakesin II, but the latter's triumph over the former is confirmed by Hiuen-Tsang. The predecessors' titles and achievements are assumed and claimed by the successors, and confusion is created sometimes by the inclusion of the period of heir-apparentcy in the regnal period, as in Chola inscriptions. It would have been difficult to discriminate between the greatness of Krishnadeva Raya of Vijayanagar and the sorry role of his successor, Achyuta Raya, if we had not indigenous and foreign literature, the latter in particular. Our imperfect knowledge of many parts of our history is due to the inadequacy of the literary sources. How many lengthy inscriptions could do duty for the *Arthasastra* of Kautilya and the *Rajatarangini* of Kalhana? For our fuller knowledge of the Muslim and British periods of Indian History we are indebted to the abundance of historical literature and state papers.

Numismatics. Indian Numismatics, or the study of Indian coins, is a pigmy in comparison with the epigraphical giant. The fortunes of coinage in India were vitally affected by foreign influences in contrast with the independent history of inscriptions. The field of Numismatics is much narrowed if the study of coin legends (inscriptions on coins) is treated as a branch of epigraphy. The study of coin images and symbols comes under art, and therefore the most distinctive field of Numismatics is the metallurgy and metrology of coins. Still, on the whole, it has almost independently resuscitated the history of a few dynasties and enriched our knowledge of some others. Its value for political, chronological, administrative, religious, economic and cultural history is not negligible. But generally its evidence is subsidiary and corroborative; it gives us only a few nuts and screws for the

framework of history In spite of the great antiquity of punch marked coins, Numismatics becomes important as an auxiliary to history only after the death of Asoka The Indo-Greek, Saka, Kushan and Gupta coins are famous, and the bilingual coins (with legends in Greek and an Indian tongue) of the Indo-Greeks, Sakas and Indo-Parthians have supplied the master key to the decipherment of Indian inscriptions. Debased coins and those in mint condition tell their own story The Roman coins found in South India are helpful to the study of Indo-Roman commercial relations in the early centuries of the Christian era

Archaeology In "The Romance of Archaeology" the principal term is defined as the study of the past in general and Alexander the Great is hailed as an archaeologist because the *Iliad* he loved best and kept a copy of it along with his sword under his pillow This definition can claim only etymological sanction A better definition is that Archaeology is the study of the material remains of the past, or "technology in the past tense" For all practical purposes Epigraphy and Numismatics may be excluded and the term confined to the study of monuments and other material relics of human labour Prehistoric Archaeology concerns itself with the artifacts of early civilization, and Archaeology of the historical period with the more impressive artistic work of man Therefore, an ancient Indian statue or building would come under Archaeology, but a treatise on it under technical literature Archaeology thus defined supplies the most direct evidence of the past, unedited by any author For prehistory our exclusive reliance is on such evidence, but for the historical epoch its service, though very important and even indispensable, is supplementary Its picture of some aspects of civilization cannot be improved upon by tons of descriptive literature Its value is increased when other sources dry up But it cannot assist in the recovery of political history Though it can give occasional clues

to chronology, its contribution to it is generally vague and conjectural. Hence much scope is afforded for speculative theorizing. Except in surface excavations and chance discoveries, the guidance of literature is necessary for exploration. It was Homer who inspired the archaeological labours of Dr. Schliemann at Troy and in Greece, and the Indus Valley revelations are the ultimate result in one sense of literary references to the fertility and wealth of Sindh in the days of the Achaemenian Empire. The marvellous results obtained in Europe, Egypt and Western Asia prepared the way for the triumphs of Indian Archaeology which is still in its infancy, particularly in South India. In short, besides constituting the sole guide to prehistory, Archaeology helps the historian of civilization in many ways. The confusion of Kanishkan chronology, which defied literary approach, has been removed to a great extent, thanks to the spade, by the establishment of the priority of the Kadphises group to the Kanishka group of Kushan kings. The Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jain monuments illustrate the history of their respective sects and the evolution of Indian civilization on its artistic side.

Foreign Evidence. The evidence of foreign observers depends for its value on their capacity by education and experience for accurate and impartial observation, on the literary and other standards they aimed at, and on the object and duration of their stay in this country. Their general and particularistic proclivities and prejudices cannot be overlooked. Generally their testimony is valuable for what they heard from reliable men and saw with their own eyes and for the period of their sojourn here. Greek knowledge of India, a bye-product of Alexander's conquest of the Indus valley, was vastly increased by Megasthenes. Before that conquest, Herodotus and others had regarded India only as an old curiosity shop. The author of the *Periplus* and the classical geographers, Strabo, Pliny and Ptolemy, gave their

attention chiefly to the commerce between India and the Western world, and after Cosmos Indicopleustes, this stream of information dries up. The Chinese pilgrims started another grand inquest of India, the most eminent of them being Fa-hien, Hiuen Tsang and I-tsing; their notices are valuable directly for the condition of Buddhism in India; the first two are further helpful for administrative history, the third for literary history, and the first and the third for Indonesian religious history. The Chinese and Tibetan annals assist us now and then, the former particularly in connection with Indian enterprise abroad. The series of Arabic histories starts with the Islamic advent to India in the eighth century A.D. The *Kitab-ul-Hind* of the great Arabist and Sanskritist, Alberuni, an erudite work throwing much light on ancient Indian culture, was exploited by Abul Fazl in the literary sections of his unique statistical compilation, the *Ain-i-Akbari*.

Chronology. The observation that geography and chronology are the two eyes of history is, as we have seen, to some extent true in the case of geography. As regards chronology, it is the very basis of the historical edifice. Though what has been depreciatingly called chronological history is not the goal of the modern historian, without chronology he is like a fish out of water. The more exact the date of happenings, the surer is his foundation, and the greater the solidity of the superstructure he rears. He should at least know the sequence of events, their priority or posteriority to other events. Imagine the consequences of regarding the Buddha as posterior to Asoka! Without dates the true causal link would be missed, and plagiarisms and indebtedness to predecessors could not be discussed. Abul Fazl's unacknowledged borrowings from Alberuni have cast a slur on his reputation for intellectual probity. The greatness of Sudraka, the Sanskrit dramatist, has been affected by the discovery of Bhasa's *Charudatta*, and that of Sayana by our knowledge of Venkata

Madhava's commentary on the *Vedas*. A few scholars pooh-pooh the chronological precision of the historian and speak in derision of Dr. Dryasdust. Though the arrangement of events in their chronological order is not the ultimate object of the student of history, it is the first step to serious historical investigation. The lack of definite chronology impedes our progress at every step in Northern Indian History up to the Mauryas and in South Indian History up to the beginning of the Christian era. In the absence of dates, history would be not only blind but also spineless. The chronological method varies with the nature of our sources. The rough and ready method of prehistoric chronology is superseded in the case of the Vedic age by literary and other approaches to its chronological problem. Our difficulties diminish as we march with the progress of time. The Saisunaga-Nanda chronology is still unsatisfactory. From the Maurya period synchronisms and eras light up the path of the historian. The synchronism of Chandragupta Maurya with Alexander the Great and Seleukos Nikator, and of his grandson Asoka with Antiochos Theos and other Western princes is "the sheet-anchor" of Maurya, pre-Maurya and, to some extent, post-Maurya chronology. The other major synchronisms are of the Satavahanas with the Western Kshatrapas, of Senguttuvan Chera with Gajabahu I of Ceylon, and of Samudragupta with Meghavarna of Ceylon. Records dated in the years of Vikrama, Saka, Kanishka, Gupta and Harsha eras supply at any rate unquestionable relative chronology. The researches of scholars have established the initial years of those eras and consequently the absolute chronology of a number of Indian dynasties. Our ancient literature is full of facts bearing on many aspects of life, but its central defect is its conspicuous lack of chronological sense.

SECTION VII. THE STONE AND IRON AGES

Geological Epochs. Three geological epochs are mentioned; primary, secondary and tertiary. India did not

exist in the first epoch. The second and the third witnessed the formation of this sub-continent and the evolution of life culminating in human life. Speculations on the cradle of humanity have placed it in Africa, Java, etc; the honour has been claimed for India as well, particularly for South India. Prehistoric ages have been named after the materials used in making implements of war and domestic utensils The Stone Age is divided into three periods: The Eolithic, Palaeolithic and Neolithic (meaning early, old and new, stone) ages The existence of eoliths or rudely shaped flints is asserted by some and denied by others; similarly, the Ice age.

The Old Stone Age. Palaeolithic remains have been found where a rock called quartzite, "an extremely refractory material compared with flint," is available; Madura, Trichinopoly, Tanjore, North Arcot, Chingleput, Bellary, Cuddapah, Nellore and Godavari Districts and Mysore. Palaeolithic caves have been discovered in the Kurnool District. The Nizam's State, Bombay Presidency, Gujarat and Rajputana are other centres of this culture. The life of the palaeolithic man does not remind us of "the noble savage." He dragged on a miserable existence with the gifts of Nature and such rude implements as the *coup de poing*, or hand-axe, which his untutored intelligence might devise. He seems to have invented fire His wooden comb has been found at Guntakal. His cave paintings at Singanpur*—a village near Raigarh in the Raigarh State, C.P.—are remarkable for figures of animals and hunting scenes, but their age is somewhat doubtful. The latest phase of the Old Stone Age is assigned to c 35,000 to c 10,000 B.C. During this period may be placed the pre-Dravidians who were allied to the African Negrito people and whose chief descendants today are the hill tribes. It is supposed by scholars that

* P. N. Mitra, *Prehistoric India*, (1927), pp. 458-68.

there was a long interval between the Old and New Stone Ages.

The New Stone Age. The Neolithic settlements were determined by the availability of the trap rock (different from the quartzite of the Palaeolithic people), suitable for making polished weapons and implements like the celt. The principal sites of Neolithic culture are found in the Salem, Cuddapah, Anantapur, Bellary and Kurnool Districts, and in the Nizam's State, Gujarat and Kathiawar. It was during this age (*c* 10,000—*c* 5,000) that the foundations of Indian civilization were laid, probably by the Dravidians. Substantial material progress was made and many of the superstitions of today originated. The nomadic life of the previous epoch was gradually superseded by settled life, signalised by the practice of agriculture, domestication of animals, and burial of the dead. Pottery and cotton-weaving were known, and the tools exhibit art and variety. Class divisions existed, but to trace to them the later caste system is to overlook the fundamental differences between the two social systems.

The Metal Age. In Northern India, the New Stone Age was succeeded by the Copper Age and in South India by the Iron Age. The Adittanallur (Adichchanallur, Tinnevelly District) settlement is "the most extentive prehistoric site so far discovered in South India." The finds here consist of big funeral urns containing complete human skeletons and rice husks, polished pottery, iron implements, gold and bronze ornaments, figures of the buffalo, etc. At Perumber (Chingleput District) have been found pottery, iron implements and chank shell ornaments. Iron Age rock-cut caves exist near Tellicherry (Malabar District), "unlike the prehistoric tombs found elsewhere," containing pottery, iron implements, grinding stones and pestles and a polished red jar with four legs.

SECTION VIII THE CHALCOLITHIC CIVILIZATION

Character of the Civilization The archaeological finds made mostly at Mohenjo-daro, on the right bank of the Indus (Larkana District, Sindh), and to some extent at Harappa (Montgomery District, Panjab) have thrown the other prehistoric antiquities into the shade Excavations of other sites as well in Sindh and the Panjab indicate that a great civilization flourished in the Indus valley, connecting it with the rest of India, as the gold found there is alloyed with silver as in Kolar (Mysore) and as some of the precious stones discovered seem to belong to the Nilgiris The name originally suggested for this astonishing civilization, "Indo-Sumerian," has been found to be unsuitable owing to its distinctive features, though commerce with Sumeria must have influenced it It is too early to replace the term now employed 'the Indus (Saindhava) civilization," by the more general term, "Indian civilization" As the weapons and utensils are of copper and stone, the label chalcolithic (copper stone) is employed, but it obscures the inconspicuousness of the stone finds and the maturity of the civilization

The Finds Houses of burnt brick (without ornamentation, but with drains storeys, pipes and other paraphernalia of civilized and luxurious life) and wide streets with public drains have been unearthed A remarkable find is the great bath with verandahs and rooms, a swimming pool in the middle and a hot air bath Many seals of diverse shapes—square, rectangular and cylindrical—are made of steatite, faience and ivory, with figures of animals like the unicorn, humped bull, tiger, elephant and fish-eating crocodile, and of many plants and human and divine beings, and with inscriptions in an undeciphered script The other important remains are stone images in yogic pose, a dancing girl in bronze, two wonderful statuettes from Harappa, and innumerable clay figurines

of men, women and animals, besides weapons and domestic utensils.

Date. A period of about 500 years is assigned to the seven strata laid bare, on the basis of two generations for each stratum. In the light of the excavations at Troy, a period of one thousand years is not untenable. On account of the striking similarities between the Indus and Sumerian seals, the latter assignable to about 3000 B.C., Sir John Marshall has suggested 3250-2750 B.C. for the Indus civilization. A slightly different opinion is that of Mackay: "The upper levels of Mohenjo-daro are contemporaneous with the latter part of the Early Dynastic Period of Babylonia, c 2550 B.C., while the lower levels where the objects found are barely distinguishable from those of the latest levels, could hardly antedate the latter by more than five hundred years, and perhaps as little as three hundred."*

Art and Writing. But for the conspicuous abdomen, the Harappa statuettes resemble the best Greek art. The dancing figure is supposed to be Nataraja, and its sculptural perfection is unrivalled by later Indian performance. Anatomical accuracy is admirably shown. Domestic utensils are plain rather than ornamented. The writing is from right to left and occasionally *boustrophedon* or right to left and left to right in alternate lines. Professor Langdon is emphatically of opinion that the script is the parent of the Brahmi script of Asoka's inscriptions. In spite of much effort, the real key to its decipherment is not available. The Indus language is thought to be Sumerian, proto-Dravidian (parent of Tamil and other Dravidian tongues), partly Sanskrit, a mixture of Indo-European and non-Indo-European elements, etc.

Religion. Terracotta figurines of the Mother Goddess show her popularity. Human sacrifices were offered to

* E. Mackay, *The Indus Civilisation*, (1935), p. 11.

her. A god with three faces, in yogic pose, surrounded by four animals, on a seal is regarded as the prototype of Siva conceived as Pasupati or Lord of Beasts; his horns must have developed later into the *trisula* or trident. The *linga* worship, reverence for trees and animals, sanctity of water, and importance of bathing are unmistakably indicated. In short, we get at the fountain-head of popular Hinduism.

Social Life. The metals and precious stones found show the activity of commerce with Western Asia, the Gangetic Valley and South India. This urban and perhaps cosmopolitan civilization has not been pictured by a Vatsyayana. There was an abundance of ornaments—girdles, ear-rings, and anklets for women, and necklaces, finger-rings and armlets for both sexes, made of gold, silver, shell, copper and even terracotta. Bangles were sometimes worn covering the whole arm up to the axilla. The domestic utensils were mostly of baked clay, rarely of copper and bronze: faience was used for ornamental vases. There were toys like whistles, carts, animals and birds and figurines of men and women The chief games were played with dice and marbles. The weights were binary and decimal: 1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 160, 200, 320, 640 and 1600. The weapons of war were axes, spears and slings, but not armour. Wheat, barley, beef, mutton, pork, poultry and fish were the articles of consumption. Cotton-spinning, agriculture and trade were the main occupations. Burials were of three kinds: complete, partial and post-cremation, the last being generally practised. In short, it is difficult to believe that the inhabitants of Mohenjo-daro were a prehistoric people.

Compared with the Early Vedic Civilization. While the Indus Valley civilization was urban, complex and luxurious, the early Vedic was rural, simple and agricultural; iron was unknown to the former and armour known only to the latter. Though meat-eating, many metals and offensive weapons were common to both, aversion for fish

was characteristic of the Vedic civilization. As against the bull, tiger and elephant and absence of the horse in one case, we have the cow and the horse of the Vedic people, who had no knowledge of the tiger and just a little acquaintance with the elephant. While images, goddesses and *lingas* were characteristic of the Indus civilization, the early Vedic was aniconic, with male gods and Agni predominant, and the phallic cult in disrepute. To this contrasted picture of the two civilizations, it is objected that the equation of the Vedic *pur* with fort is untenable, that some utensils like the mortar and pestle were employed in the Vedic period, that the Vedic aversion for fish is ill-founded, that images, Siva worship and *yoga* are mentioned in the *Vedas*, and that the condemnation of *sisnadevas* or phallic worshippers is sectional. But setting aside argument from silence, absence of evidence, and possibility of evidence forthcoming in future, the extant data, archaeological and literary, broadly justify the striking dissimilarity between the Indus and Rigvedic civilizations. In spite of the protests of a few scholars, the Indus civilization is definitely non-Aryan, pre-Aryan, and superior to the Indo-Aryan civilization, though it is too soon to say that it was originated by the Dravidians.*

Historical Significance. About 3000 B.C. Mohenjodaro supplied its citizens with comforts and luxuries unavailable elsewhere in that age. That city beautiful produced works of art which could stand the test of a Greek connoisseur of the fourth century B. C. The study of the remains of the Saindhava civilization has necessitated a revision of some of our old ideas. India must now be bracketed with Iran, Mesopotamia and Egypt, the countries which initiated or developed the process of civilization, though it is too early to regard her as the cradle of civilization. The *Rigveda* is no longer the

* K. N. Dikshit, *Prehistoric Civilisation of the Indus Valley* (1939), p. 58.

starting point of Indian civilization and history, and its picture of the Dasyus is indubitably a distorted picture. We cannot say now that there was no bronze age in India. Saivism originated, not during the post-Rigvedic period, but in the chalcolithic age. The Brahmi script is to be connected with the Saindhava script, not with any foreign alphabet. The indebtedness of early Indian art and of punch-marked coinage to foreigners is no longer plausible. The popularity of beards in the Rigvedic age is in contrast with the love of shaving evinced by the people of Mohenjodaro; in other words, we started with no predilection for beards. Lastly, our jungle and hill tribes today are not the true representatives of pre-Aryan Indian culture. In brief, as early as 3000 B C. the people of India were a clean-shaven, hygienic and artistic people with a passion for bathing. They possessed advanced ideas of town-planning; worshipped the Mother Goddess, Siva, icons and *lingas;* practised *yoga;* reverenced the bull rather than the cow; consumed meat and fish; wore cotton clothes; burnt the dead without worshipping Agni or constructing *agnikundas* or fire-pits, and advanced in commerce and writing and in other adjuncts of civilised life.

CHAPTER II

THE VEDIC AGE

(*c* 2000—*c* 600 B.C.)

SECTION I. THE VEDIC LITERATURE

Different Strata. The Vedic age is the period which witnessed the composition of the four *Vedas*, the *Brahmanas*, the *Aranyakas*, and the *Upanishads*, the last two constituting the *jnanakanda* and the others the *karmakanda*. The Mimamsakas and the Vedantins regard the *karmakanda* and the *jnanakanda* respectively as the *Veda par excellence*, each treating the other *kanda* as *arthavada* (explanatory and secondary), not as *vidhi* (mandatory and primary). Though this distinction is fundamental philosophically, the unity of the whole collection is recognised by the division of each *Veda* into the *Samhita*, *Brahmana*, *Aranyaka* and *Upanishad* portions and by their collective appellation, the *sruti* or revealed literature. The *Rigveda*, the *Samaveda* and the *Yajurveda* are known as the *trayi* or the triad of *Vedas*. From the historical point of view, the *Rigveda*, the *Yajurveda* and the *Atharvaveda* are important, the last containing matter relating to pre-Rigvedic times, though later in composition than the other three *Vedas*. The first covers an epoch by itself, and the second marks the transition between the Rigvedic period and that of the *Brahmanas*, just as the *Aranyakas* are transitional between the *Brahmanas* and the *Upanishads*. The Rigvedic age may be regarded as the early Vedic period and the age of the *Brahmanas* and the *Upanishads* as the later Vedic period.

The Four Vedas. The *Rigveda* is the earliest and historically the most important stratum of the Vedic Literature; its *riks* or hymns are mostly addressed to various gods, eulogising and imploring them for worldly advan-

tages like longevity, wealth and progeny From them the other *Vedas* have borrowed freely The *Samaveda* is characteristic for its manner of recitation, its contents being almost identical with those of the *Rigveda* About half of the *Yajurveda* is new and more than half of it in prose and its arrangement is subordinated to the performance of *yajnas* or sacrifices The *Atharvaveda* is the grand repository of occult lore—magic and spells—, and its canonicity was recognised much later than that of the other *Vedas*, though with a difference Hence its exclusion from the *trayi*

The Brahmanas and the Aranyakas The *Brahmanas* or explanations in prose of the sacrificial ceremonial, contain *vidhis* or injunctions and *arthavadas* or glorifications of the value of the ritual. The most important of them from the historical point of view are the *Satapatha* and *Aitareya Brahmanas* The name *Aranyakas*, or forest compositions indicates their esoteric origin and character, and the *Aitareya* and *Taittiriya Aranyakas* are well known

The Upanishads The *Upanishads* contain esoteric knowledge *par excellence* which is summed up in the *mahavakya* (the great statement) of the *Chandogya Upanishad* ,(*Atma*) *Tat tvam-asi* (That art thou), read as *Atat tvam-asi* by Madhva and other dualists Only a few of the numerous *Upanishads* are pre Buddhistic They together with the *Brahma Sutras* and the *Bhagavad Gita* are called the *Prasthanatraya* commented upon by Sankara and Madhva. The *Upanishads* in general may be described as the literature of spiritual power, appealing to man, irrespective of climes and ages They evoked the enthusiastic admiration of the German philosopher, Schopenhauer, who says " That incomparable books stirs the spirit to the very depths of the soul From every sentence deep, original, and sublime thoughts arise
In the whole world there is no study, except that of the originals, so beneficial and so elevating as that of the

Oupnekhat. It has been the solace of my life, it will be the solace of my death." He obtained a Latin-Greek translation of the Persian version of Dara Shukoh. Alberuni admired them, and Dara studied and translated them or merely patronised their translation. In India the *Upanishads* became the fountain-head of the Vedanta philosophy. In short, they embody the thought-power of the Brahmans and Kshatriyas, and the most important of them are the *Chandogya* and *Brihadaranyaka Upanishads.*

Historical Value of Vedic Literature. The Vedic Literature is voluminous, very well preserved and contemporary, and its evidence is more trustworthy than that of the Epics or the *Puranas.* In it we get at the early phases of Indian life and thought. Its antiquity gives it a unique importance for the history of the world. Its account of Indian life is a series of pictures of the evolution of Vedic civilization, from robust optimism to rank pessimism. The geographical knowledge exhibited in each stratum helps us to trace the progress of the Aryanisation of India in three stages. But, owing to lack of precise chronology, the dynastic annals cannot be sketched, and the doubtful help of the *Puranas* is requisitioned, a few scholars emphasising the value of the tradition embodied in them, on the ground that it is the true historical tradition, as distinct from the religious or priestly tradition of the *Vedas.* The only bit of archaeological evidence available is a Vedic *smasana* (burial ground) discovered at Lauriya Nandangarh (Bihar).* In the historical interpretation of the *Vedas,* the argument from silence is sometimes used without justification, and it should never be forgotten that we are here concerned with the chronicle of one aspect of life primarily, and that the record of secular life is incidental and fragmentary. We know next to nothing about the distant precursors of Kautilya and Vatsyayana.

* *The Cambridge History of India* (C.H.I.), I. (1922), p. 616.

striking similarities between the language of the *Vedas* and of the *Avesta* (the Iranian *Vedas*) on the one hand, and Greek, Latin, German and English on the other, have led to the philologist's conclusion that they constitute a single linguistic family, called Indo-Germanic or Indo-European. The connection between the Vedic and Avestan languages is closer still, so much so that the translation of a Vedic passage into Avestan and *vice versa* may be made by the process of word-substitution. Further, the Saka and Tokharian languages of Central Asia (of Kucha and Turfan, Sinkiang) reveal closer affinities with Greek and Latin than with Indo-Iranian languages, and may be regarded as the connecting link between the European and Asiatic branches of the Indo-European family. Therefore the speakers of Vedic Sanskrit must have come to India from outside, most probably from Central Asia. Moreover, the existence of the Brahui language as an island of Dravidian speech in Baluchistan may be treated as a consequence of the Aryan invasion of India. Secondly, German archaeologists have unearthed at Boghaz-koi in Cappadocia (Asia Minor) inscriptions of about 1400 B. C., recording inter-tribal treaties which invoke Vedic gods like Indra, Varuna and the Nasatyas. Therefore the Indo-Iranian branch of the Aryans must have settled down in Asia Minor before that date. This indicates the non-Indian origin of the Indo-Aryans, though not the date of their immigration into India. Thirdly, the geographical outlook of the *Rigveda* is significant: twenty-five rivers, mostly of the Indus system, are mentioned. Therefore the earliest stratum of the Vedic Literature locates the Indo-Aryans in South-East Afghanistan, the N. W. F. P. and the Panjab. The Jumna and the Ganges are referred to sparingly and inconspicuously; they indicate the eastern limit of Indo-Aryan expansion. The *Rigveda* describes the wars of the Aryans with the Dasyus; the former fervently implore their gods to save them from their strong, resourceful

and dreaded foe, the latter who are condemned as *dasas* or slaves and *anasas* or noseless (speechless) people Thus the *Rigveda* contains evidence of the displacement of the conquered from North Western India by a people who apparently were foreigners finding their position difficult and dangerous amidst a numerous and hostile population already in possession of the soil Lastly, there is now the Indo-Aryan physical type in Kashmir the Panjab and Rajputana—tall fair complexioned long headed and straight nosed—, distinct from the Dravidian type The cumulative weight of these arguments is hard to belittle

Objections not Serious The critics of the orthodox theory urge that language is no test of race, that the Aryans might well have migrated from India to Iran and other countries, that the evidence of the Brahui language may indicate its expulsion from India by purely indigenous movements that the Vedic gods might have migrated from India to Asia Minor, and that the arguments of the orthodox school may at best prove a cultural invasion, not necessarily a racial conflict But these objections oppose possibilities to probabilities and fail to note the direction indicated by all the arguments on the other side read together, which are unexceptionable as arguments of general validity Secondly, it is objected that there is no reference in the *Rigveda* to the invasion of India by the Aryans or to their original home, and that the fights between the Aryans and the Dasyus are for cattle, women and other forms of primitive wealth But the prayers of foreigners could not be expected to mention their original home even if they remembered it, the conflicts recorded are more severe than those of cattle lifting border tribes and the appeal of the Aryans to their gods reveals their position as one in a foreign country Thirdly, the stability of physical characters is questioned, it is strange that in the Panjab a land of many invasions there should be a pure and stable physical type But head formation

is a comparatively stable feature, and physical types change only in special circumstances. Lastly, it is contended that the *Puranas* say nothing about the foreign origin of the Indo-Aryans, that Indian tradition regards the Madhyadesa as the holy land of the Hindus, and that the Panjab has not been held in esteem by Hindu orthodoxy. Therefore, according to Mr. Pargiter, Allahabad was the starting point of the Aryan migration; "Indian tradition suggests a reverse origin for the Iranians, which is linguistically tenable, which harmonises with the Boghaz-koi treaty, and which can account for their language and religion."* But the value of the negative evidence of the *Puranas* may be doubted, and the idea of the sanctity of the Madhyadesa was of later origin. Moreover, our problem is much more than an Indo-Iranian problem. Mr. Pargiter's theory gives a partial explanation of the relevant facts, and is a possible, not a probable, theory. Therefore it is extremely probable that there was an Aryan invasion of India.

The Wedge Theory. The theory a second Aryan invasion of India through Chitral (N.W.F.P.) and Gilgit (Kashmir) with insufficient women is advanced in order to explain the broad distinction between the vernaculars of the Madhyadesa (the United Provinces) and those of the outer band (*viz.*, West, South and East of the Madhyadesa), coupled with the close affinities of the languages of the latter group. Hence the supposition that the second stream of Aryan invaders struck like a wedge into the Middle Country. This theory, suggested by the linguistic data, is supported by the anthropometric differences in the Indus and Ganges Valleys. The fraternal polyandry of the Pandavas is regarded as the custom of the late comers resulting from inadequacy of women. Thus this theory, called after Hoernle, Grierson and Risley, or

* F. E. Pargiter, *Ancient Indian Historical Tradition* (1922), p. 302.

named the Ring Fence or Wedge theory, gives some explanation of the linguistic crux, but cannot be regarded as perfectly sound It is said that invaders marching through mountainous regions with a paucity of women would not be large numerically, and such a small body of men could not permanently change the physical type of the Madhyadesa the Dravidian type into the Aryo Dravidian Mr Pargiter argues that his theory of Allahabad being the starting point of the Aryan adventure can explain the linguistic facts " simply and fully "

Date of the Vedas The date of the Vedas is a much debated question which can be answered only with partial certainty There are various approaches to it, scientific and literary, and the apparently less certain approach gives the greater moral certainty The lower chronological limit of the Vedic Literature is fixed with comparative ease as the Upanishadic thought is the bed rock of Buddhism, and consequently the last phase of that literature must be anterior to 600 B C The upper limit is the date of the *Rigveda*, which is practically identical with the date of the Aryan invasion of India On geological grounds relating to the almost insular character of the Panjab and to earthquake shocks it is held that the *Rigveda* must have been composed about 25 000 B C (Mr A C Das) The astronomical solution is less ambitious though it shows the tendency to attribute high antiquity to the *Vedas* A passage in the *Brahmanas* bearing on the point in the ecliptic reached by the sun at solstice is understood to indicate 1186 B C (Dr Haug) On the basis of a change in the beginning of the seasons the *Rigveda* is assigned to about 4000 B C (Dr Jacobi) The same conclusion is suggested by calculations regarding the vernal equinox (Mr B G Tilak) But this scientific solution depends for its validity on the accuracy of the basic data, and if the data were correct why are different results obtained? The literary approach is founded on the language of the various strata of the Vedic Literature

and on the evolution of civilization revealed in them. Though Max Muller was so pessimistic as to declare that no human power could definitely say whether the Vedic hymns were composed in 1000 or 3000 B.C., he tentatively suggested 1200 B.C. for the earliest hymns, recognising at the same time the possibility of pushing that date further back. The *Puranas* give the interval between Parikshit and Mahapadma Nanda as 1050 years, and this would take the former sovereign to the 14th century B.C. Identifying this Parikshit with his namesake of the *Atharvaveda,* the *Rigveda* may be assigned to about 2000 B.C. and the *Brahmanas* to about 1000 B.C.

Aryanisation of India. The Aryanisation of India was a long process partially pictured in the Vedic Literature, and the *Ramayana* gives us glimpses into the Aryanisation of South India. The geographical outlook of the *Rigveda* is confined to North-Western India, the Ganges and the Jumna forming its eastern limit. The *Yajurveda* shows a wider knowledge of Northern India, radiating from the Ganges Valley. The *Atharvaveda* summarises the geographical knowledge of the other *Vedas.* The *Brahmanas* mention a number of cis-Vindhyan tribes and peoples. Thus during the creative period of the four *Vedas* and in the subsequent period of systematisation, followed again by another creative epoch of the *Upanishads,* we discern the reclamation of India to Aryan ways progressing stage by stage, corresponding to the three geographical areas—the Indus Valley, the Ganges Valley and the rest of Northern India, and South India.

SECTION III. POLITICAL HISTORY

Parikshit and Janaka. Data for political history we have in plenty in the Vedic Literature, the *Itihasas* and the *Puranas.* In spite of chronological difficulties, the example of Pargiter has been persevered in by other scholars, except in his allegiance to the Puranic tradition in preference to that embodied in the Vedas. The distrust

of either tradition is undeserved, but neither tradition is free from fault. A harmonious combination of all the available data, though undisciplined by chronology, may be attempted. Mr. H. C. Raychaudhuri, relying on the Vedic tradition, assigns Parikshit to the 9th century B.C.* Parikshit, Janamejaya and their successors ruling over the Kuru country, including Hastinapura and Kurukshetra, with their capital at Asandivat, were followed by Janaka of Upanishadic fame who is placed by Mr. Chaudhuri in the 7th century B.C., though the Puranic tradition would take him back to the 12th century B.C. The latter was king of Videha (North Bihar), with his capital at Mithila. There were nine other contemporary kingdoms, including Kasi and Kosala. Janaka was a *samrat* (higher than a king), and his court became truly famous for philosophical disputation led by Yajnavalkya, as recorded in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*. The fall of Videha under his successors towards the close of the 7th century B.C. led to the establishment of republican rule there and to the rise of the kingdom of Kasi.

SECTION IV. ADMINISTRATION

The Vedic Rajan. The Rigvedic tribal polity was monarchical, though not to the exclusion of non-monarchical forms of government. The rule was hereditary succession, diversified by elective kingship. The *rajan* or king was the war-lord, accompanied by a number of officers, of whom the *purohita* or priest was the most influential. Thus the tradition of ecclesiastical statesmen developed. The king's other functions are not quite clear, but there is much emphasis on royal activity to protect the people. The *senani* or commandant was in charge of minor expeditions. The *gramani* or village headman was a sub-commander. The popular element is to be found in the *samiti* and *sabha*, but the character of

* Raychaudhuri, *Political History of Ancient India*, (1938), p. 29.

these two bodies is obscure. In this period, the *rajan*, like the Homeric king, was merely the highest of the nobles, and there would not be much scope for the development of his autocracy. In the later Vedic age, the progress of political integration is vouched for by a crop of technical terms, indicative of many kinds of sovereignty, recorded in the *Aitareya Brahmana—rajya, vairajya* and *samrajya*—and by the elaboration of the ritual of coronation—the *vajapeya, rajasuya* and *asvamedha* sacrifices. In other words, the conceptions of *adhirat* and *ekarat* developed in this age. With the external growth of the kingdom, royal power increased, and the popular assemblies seem to have declined, though their existence is proved by the recorded instances of their decrees expelling kings. The royal officers became numerous, and the *purohita* was still the chief of the *ratnins*.

SECTION V. RELIGION

The Sacrifice and the Atman Theory. The Rigvedic religion was worship of the forces of Nature, though Varuna controlled the *rita* or moral order. He was gradually superseded by Indra. Agni and Soma were next in importance. A few goddesses occupied a subordinate position. Gods like Mitra (Sun) and Varuna were bracketed together. Sometimes one god is lauded as the greatest, another god receiving the same honour on a different occasion.—henotheism.* Rudra and Vishnu who became prominent later were now minor deities. This polytheism was tempered towards the close of the period by the recognition of the unity of the gods in the following remarkable statement: "What is in reality One is called differently." There were no speculations on the life after death. The *Rigveda* emphasises the sacrifice as the means of propitiating the gods and of obtaining from them long life, cows, able-bodied sons, etc. Human sacri-

* H. D. Griswold, *The Religion of the Rigveda* (1923), pp. 108-9.

fice was however absent The pious offerings were grain milk ghee flesh and *soma* juice Like the early Indo Aryans their gods were famous for manliness power and practical wisdom, except in the case of Varuna their ethical character was not stressed and transcendental knowledge was beyond their ken In the next period Rudra and, to a lesser extent, Vishnu became major gods, and the former received the appellation of Siva In the evolution of the Rudra Siva conception, non Aryan influences asserted themselves The technique and theory of sacrifice were elaborated to such an extent that religion became mechanical and rigid Thus was supplied the basis for the later extravagant view of the Mimamsakas that the sacrifice was all in all and that by means of it man could subdue the gods This concentration on sacrifice led to the elevation of the ritualistic *Veda* to the rank of infallible guide to salvation irrespective of God Himself Consequently the expounders of the glory of Vedic sacrifice became atheists, though technically they were not regarded as *nastikas* (atheists) because of their unbounded faith in the *Vedas* During this period, philosophical speculation reached its climax in the *Upanishads*, which identify the real with the absolute which cannot be described except negatively—*neti, neti* (not that not that) The *mahavakya, tat tvam-asi,* identifies the *jivatma* (individual soul) with the *paramatma* (universal soul or "over soul") This period further witnessed the formulation of the doctrine of *karma*, investing a series of individual births with organic unity The doctrine of *karma* (rebirth, reincarnation, transmigration) which is fully developed in the *Upanishads,* is first mentioned in the *Satapatha Brahmana* "He is born again here as a worm, as a bird as a tiger, as a man, according to his *karma*" But the explanation of the phenomenal world by the doctrine of *maya* was an achievement of later thought

SECTION VI. ECONOMIC CONDITION

Early Vedic Age. Though hunting was a major activity, the Rigvedic society was predominantly engaged in pastoral and agricultural pursuits in villages. Cattle, horses, sheep, goats, asses and dogs were reared. Agricultural operations were performed, *yava* or barely grown, and channels dug for irrigation. Working in wood and metals (*ayas*) was well advanced, weaving and tanning being known. Agricultural labour was mostly free, not servile. Navigation was in a rudimentary stage. Famines were dreaded. The food of the people consisted of barley cakes, milk, ghee, flesh and beef. Though oxen were killed for consumption, the cow was a sacred animal called *aghnya* (not-to-be-killed). The intoxicating drinks were the sacrificial juice from the *soma* plant and *sura* prepared from barley. Woollens were used, though the case of cotton is debated. Gold ornaments like necklaces, earrings, anklets and bracelets were worn by men and women. Attention was given to hair-dressing, and though beards were popular, shaving was known. The chief amusements were chariot riding, dicing and dancing. There were a few musical instruments like the lute and the flute. There was commercial intercourse by land and water with Western Asia and Egypt. The system of exchange by barter existed along with *nishka* (coin) and *hiranyapinda* (unstamped gold).

Later Vedic Age. In the next period, agriculture and cattle rearing made good progress. Better ploughs and manures were used. Grains like wheat and rice, and oilseeds like sesame, were grown. Urban life developed gradually. Industrial activity became more varied, and innumerable professions came into existence including that of the *sreshthi* (flourishing merchant). Even usury made its appearance. Further knowledge of metals was acquired—tin, lead and silver. Food, drink and clothing did not change. The Upanishadic Yajnavalkya, the greatest philosopher of the Vedic age, was very fond of

beef. The Sanskrit word *goghana* (guest) means literally one for whom an ox is slain. The supreme *dharma* of *ahimsa* (non-injury) was of later growth. Foreign trade became more extensive. New coins came into existence—*satamana, suvarna, pada* and *krishnala.*

SECTION VII. SOCIAL LIFE

Caste. The only reference to the four castes in the *Rigveda* is in the *Purushasukta,* which is regarded by some as an interpolation. It is a part and parcel of the creation myth, to which parallels are met with in other countries At best it may be regarded as embodying the organic conception of Indo-Aryan society. Historically the caste system may be traced to an initial segregation of the conquerors from the conquered, and a subsequent division among the conquerors themselves as civilization advanced. Thus emanated the distinction between the *dvija* (twice-born) and the *sudra*—a hard nut to crack for etymologists Sankara derives the word *sudra* from a root meaning to be sorrowful. Probably it was the name of a Dravidian tribe first encountered by the Aryans in India, subsequently applied to similar tribes.* The caste system was apparently based on the distinction of *varna* (colour of the skin or pigmentation). It is going too far to say that it did not exist even in an embryonic stage in the Rigvedic age, though caste divisions were natural and normal in the beginning. In the period of the *Brahmanas* and the *Upanishads,* the four castes were fully formed and also many sub-castes. The flexibility of the system is proved by the acceptance of Satyakama Jabala, the son of a *dasi* (slave woman) by an unknown father, as the disciple of a famous Rishi because he spoke the truth and was therefore a Brahman. The prohibition of inter-caste marriage was not rigid, and cases of ascent to the highest social status are on record. The evolution of caste

* D R Bhandarkar, *Some Aspects of Ancient Indian Culture* (1940), p. 12.

during this period was due to the coming together of the conquerors and the vanquished, and the resulting social compromise was less objectionable than the reduction of the conquered to slavery and degradation might have been. The early Indian caste system resembles the social arrangement outlined in Plato's *Republic*. "At its best the (Indian) system may be reckoned as one of the most successful attempts to maintain harmony between different races and creeds living together in geographical propinquity that the world has seen....In its early stages it represents one of the most successful applications of a philosophical-principle to the world of concrete fact that mankind has contrived."* Even the rigid caste system of later times may be regarded as less ungenerous than the Greek system of slavery in antiquity.

Women. Though the patriarchal Rigvedic society subordinated the female to the male, monogamy was the rule, and the bond between husband and wife was regarded as holy and permanent. Polygamy was exceptional, and child marriage unknown, the normal age of marriage being sixteen or seventeen years. Post-puberty marriage was normal, and old maids existed. Freedom of choice prevailed, and only brother-sister and father-daughter marriages were prohibited. Adoption of sons was not favoured. The hardship of the widow was occasionally tempered by *niyoga*, (levirate) that is, marriage of the sonless widow with her deceased husband's brother. In the later Vedic period, the custom of *sati* or self-immolation of widows grew up. Royal polygamy became normal; four wives were allowed. Though female children were not exposed, the son was preferred to the daughter. Restrictions on marriage increased, and *sagotra* marriages were disapproved. Some of the texts allow monandry or only one husband at a time. The education of women throughout the Vedic age was of a high

* C. E. M. Joad, *The Story of Indian Civilisation* (1936), p. 41.

standard Some of the Rigvedic hymns were composed by ladies—Visvavara, Ghosha, Lopamudra, Apala and Mudgalani—and in the *Upanishads*, Yajnavalkya is questioned by his wife Maitreyi (his other wife being Katyayani) and challenged by Gargi, though that sage met the challenge successfully The distinction between Upadhyayas (women teachers) and Upadhyayanis (wives of teachers) is significant Whatever might be their inferiority in other respects, women did not lack mental pabulum, and their equality with men in religion and ritual was substantial though the *upanayana* ceremony had fallen into disuse in their case It was the intellectual starvation of women in later ages that was responsible for the assimilation of their position to that of Sudras, and for the development among them of an inferiority complex *

Crimes In the Rigvedic age, various forms of theft with and without violence were common The marriage between brother and sister, or father and daughter, was condemned as incest, though in much later times brother-sister marriages were recognised in Iran and Egypt, especially in royal families The standard of sexual morality was high, though prostitution existed In the later Vedic period, foeticide, murder of Brahmans and theft of gold were regarded as major crimes Accidental killing of a man was distinguished from culpable homicide In the *Upanishads* the axe ordeal is mentioned for thieves

SECTION VIII CULTURE

Writing According to the orthodox view, the Vedic Literature was committed to writing long after its composition, and writing was introduced into India about 800 B C The Brahmi alphabet is traced to a Semitic source Some would assign the origin of writing in India

* A. S Altekar, *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilisation* (1938), pp 406-15

to the 5th century B.C. But there is no doubt that it must have come into existence before Panini, and we know that prehistoric Mohenjo-daro was not ignorant of writing.

Literature. The Vedic Literature has already been surveyed. Though its literary value cannot equal its historical value, the hyms exhibit "a suprising degree of metrical skill and command of language and contain much genuine poetry often expressed in beautiful and even notable imagery; (though) their poetry is often imposed by conceits and mysticism, its diction is simpler and more natural than that of post-Vedic Sanskrit."*

Grammar and Lexicography. Towards the close of the Vedic age lived Yaska. His *Nirukta* is valuable for etymology and grammar; and his prose is in classical style. He mentions a number of his predecessors. He is assigned by some to about 500 B.C.; but his priority to Panini is indisputable. The *Pratisakyas* of the Vedic period bear evidence of the grammatical analysis characteristic of the age. The *Nighantus* (glossaries) of nouns and verbs record the earliest efforts of Indian lexicographers.

Philosophy, Medicine and Astronomy. The Yoga system must have been of earlier origin than the Sankhya. Medicine declined to some extent after the Rigvedic period as the status of the physician deteriorated. Numerous diseases are mentioned: consumption, leprosy, dysentery, jaundice, senility, etc. The *Atharvaveda* and the *Satapatha Brahmana* give a correct list of human bones. Much progress was made in astronomy. In the Rigvedic age the year consisted of twelve months of thirty days each, and a thirteenth month also existed. In the *Brahmana* period, we find twelve months divided into six seasons and the knowledge of twenty-seven or twenty-eight *nakshatras* (stars). The introduction of the latter and of the legend of the flood

* A. A. Macdonell, *India's Past* (1927), p. 39.

substratum of historical truth, the *Ramayana* is more imaginary than historical, in spite of its greater unity and compactness. While Vyasa cannot be regarded as a single author, Valmiki is no shadowy figure. The civilization described in the epics is many-sided and contradictory, and the works, if treated historically in their present form, can only give us a bundle of contradictions. No useful purpose is served in detailing their social and cultural contents if these cannot be read along with the other better sources available for the different periods of early Indian History. "There can be no doubt that, originally at least, the ancient epics belonged rather to the Kshatriyas than to the Brahmans."* Another view is: "The Ramayana, indeed, is seen from the very beginning....to be a work of the Brahmans. On the other hand,....it was a warrior that sung this heroic song"† (the nucleus of the *Mahabharata*). Speculation on such lines is futile because the literate class shaped the epics from the beginning, whatever may be the character of the themes.

Administration. Political integration and differentiation made greater progress during the so-called epic period than in the Vedic age; *vide* the *rajasuya* of Yudhishthira. The king was advised not only by ministers but also by his retinue. The strength and prestige of monarchy gradually reduced the influence of the *sabha* or the popular element in the polity. As regards succession to the throne, the law of primogeniture was occasionally superseded in the case of incompetent princes. The *Santiparvan* of the *Mahabharata* refers to *ganas* or republics and to groups or confederations of *ganas*.

Social life. The caste system was not rigid. The son of a Brahman by a wife of one of the *dvija* castes obtained the social status of his father. The basic importance of character rather than of birth or learning for Brahman-

* E. J. Rapson, *Ancient India* (1916), p. 72.
† J. J. Meyer, *Sexual Life in Ancient India* (1930), I, p. 2.

hood is emphasised. "On the subject of woman ..the two great epics, especially the Mahabharata, contain very contradictory utterances, and often one saying will flatly contradict another"* Girls received some education and were married at a reasonable age Besides the *svayamvara* there were other forms of marriage Royal polygamy was common, and polyandry rare Neither *sati* nor remarriage of widows was encouraged, though they were not absent† As regards the status and education of women, there was a falling off from the standards of the Vedic period The heroic age witnessed the ascendancy of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, and the belief grew in the *avatara* of Vishnu The *Bhagavad Gita* inculcates the *bhaktimarga* Indra gradually lost his importance, and new gods like Skanda made their appearance

Influence of the Epics Like the Homeric poems, the Sanskrit epics have promoted Indian unity, their innumerable unhistorical elements‡ have not minimised their literary or religious value They have inspired the literatures of India, Sanskrit and Vernacular, and their appeal is truly pan Indian They have contributed substantially to the cultural unity of India

*Meyer, *op. cit.*, p 3

† N K. Sidhanta, *The Heroic Age of India* (1929), p 168

‡ Sidhanta, *op. cit.*, p 111

CHAPTER III

THE SAISUNAGA-NANDA PERIOD

(*c.* 600—*c.* 325 B.C.)

SECTION I. THE RELIGIOUS QUEST

Character of the Period. The sixth century B.C. witnessed religious and political developments of a far-reaching character, and the intellectual and moral efforts of the age in India were so intensive and conspicuous that it has been called "a wonderful century." In the same century lived the Buddha, Heraclitus, Isaiah, Confucius and Lao Tse, without knowing or influencing one another, and it has been characterised as "the beginning of the adolescence of mankind." Zoroaster (660—580 B.C.) belonged partly to the century, though some would assign him to about 1000 B.C. The Saisunaga-Nanda period further saw the beginnings of foreign penetration into India which culminated in the crowning ambition of Alexander the Great. The political integration of Northern India advanced so rapidly that an imperial system was elaborated before the time of Chandragupta Maurya, supplying the background for the *Arthasastra* of Kautilya and heralding the downfall of the republican institutions which had been so strong in the sixth century B.C. The Buddhist upheaval stirred the Brahmanical society to its depths so that religious and social reconstruction on its part became inevitable, and the *Sutras* made their appearance. Further, Panini, the link between the Vedic and post-Vedic periods, lived in this epoch.

Religious Unrest. The religious quest characteristic of the sixth century B.C., outlined in the literature of the period, should not mislead us into the supposition of an age when men in general, hanging head downwards, panted for salvation. The activity of the period was that

of the leaders whose number is no doubt surprisingly large. Whether there were sixty-two schools of thought or not, diverse systems prevailed, ranging from rank atheism and unabashed materialism to mechanical piety and quickened spirituality. The contrast between Ajita Kesa Kambalin (Invincible Hair Shirt), the leading materialist, and the high-minded Gautama Buddha cannot be exaggerated. The theory of life propounded by Gautama and Mahavira was the successor to multitudinous theories emitted by self-constituted teachers, more noisy than profound, and represented the survival of the fittest. Animism clashed with atheism and agnosticism, polytheism with pantheism, dualism watching the fray. In short, the problem of *moksha* or salvation rivetted the attention and called forth the passionate devotion of a large number of prominent personalities.

Causes neither Racial nor Social. This religious unrest is supposed by some to be the offspring of racial conflict and social disquiet. The Kshatriya origin of the two great Orders is interpreted as the revolt from Brahman domination of people of Tibeto-Mongolian origin, wedded to republicanism. This theory of a reaction against Aryan racialism is based on the fact that the Lichchhavis and the Sakyas had some customs like the exposure of the dead,* which also prevailed in Tibet, and that they were upholders of the republican tradition. But the members of the first three castes were *dvijas*, and the Kshatriyas were intellectually active in the Vedic period, particularly in that of the *Upanishads*. The author of the *gayatri* of the *Rigveda*, the most sacred of the Vedic *mantras*, is Visvamitra, a Kshatriya. Janaka, again a Kshatriya, dominated the Upanishadic age. Moreover, the Mongolian origin of early Indian republicanism is untenable,† the Mongolian element in history is

* *Indian Antiquary*, 1903, pp. 233–35.

† K. P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity* (2nd edition, 1943), pp. 177-86.

not associated specially with constitutionalism. The Indian republics of the sixth century B. C. were the outcome of previous Aryan development from the age of the *Brahmanas*; the *Aitareya Brahmana* reveals the existence of a variety of governmental forms ranging from absolutism to popular rule. Therefore neither the protest of the Sakyas against Brahmanism nor their republicanism can sustain the theory of the racial heterogeneity of Brahmans and Kshatriyas. This theory is not only needless to explain the religious effervescence of the sixth century B.C., but is also in violent contradiction with the known facts of Aryan progress during the period before that century. Above all, the Buddha professed to declare "the four *Aryan* truths." As regards the social factor, though he discarded caste distinctions within his sect, he waged no war, much less an inexpiable war, against caste. The Vedic system was so flexible that it could not and did not agitate Brahmanical society in the age of the Buddha. "It is nothing better than a fiction of romance to see in the institution of the Sangha and in Buddhism in general, a reaction against the regime of caste."* The burden of the Buddha's song was that a Brahman should be a true Brahman. Therefore no crusade against caste was called for, nor was one preached by Gautama.

But Religious. The true cause of religious ferment in the sixth century B. C. was neither racial nor social but religious. Religious dissent was promoted by the soulless sacrificial system laid down in the *karmakanda* of the *Vedas* which was not only magical and mystical and therefore meaningless, but entailed the shedding of innocent animal blood and troubled tender consciences. No doubt the Upanishadic way was different, but its abstruseness did not appeal to many: desire causes existence; existence causes misery; the cure for misery is cessation of desire by true knowledge; true knowledge is comprehension of

* J. Barth, *The Religions of India* (1891), p. 125.

the reality that everything is *atman* (soul) and the *atman* is everything, all that seems to exist besides the *atman* is unreal Therefore what was needed in the larger interests of the country was a short, easy and intelligible *yana* or way to *nirvana* or salvation for all people in this existence This need was supplied by the Buddha and Mahavira by the introduction of the most necessary changes in the old religious system The pessimistic view of life and the doctrine of *Karma* were accepted by them, but not the authority of the *Vedas* or of the Brahmans as spiritual guides Salvation was aimed at not only for the Aryan but also for the *mlechchha* (non Aryan, literally a man of indistinct speech corresponding exactly to the Greek sense of barbarian) Religious instruction was to be in public for men and women in a language known to them Above all a practical ethical code was to be substituted for arid ritualism and metaphysical subtlety

SECTION II GAUTAMA BUDDHA CHRONOLOGY AND CAREER

Date of the Buddha *c* 567—*c* 487 B C Though some scholars support the traditional date of the Buddha's *Parinibbana* (the great or final decease as distinct from his deaths in previous births), 543 B C the largely supported date falls between 488 and 477 B C Dr Smith adhered to 487 B C for a long time, but finally accepted the traditional date Dr Geiger suggests 483 B C but is not against 487 Diwan Bahadur L D Swamikannu Pillai gives "the true and exact day" of the Buddha's death as Tuesday, 1st April 478 B C Assuming 325 B C as the date of Chandragupta Maurya's accession the date of Asoka's coronation is 325—(24+28+4) = 269 B C (*vide* Chapter IV, Section V), and we have merely to add to it the interval of 218 years between that event and the Buddha's decease according to the Ceylonese Chronicles This date 487 B C is supported by "the dotted record" of Canton (China) Therefore on the ground that the

Buddha lived for eighty years, according to Buddhist tradition, we may get at his date of birth: 487+80=567 B.C.

543 B. C. Untenable. The traditional date 543 B.C. for the *Buddhanirvana* is supported by Dr. Smith in a circuitous way. Assigning 165 B.C. for the fifth regnal year of Kharavela of Kalinga and accepting the identification of the Nanda king of the Hathigumpha inscription of Kharavela with Nandivardhana, the latter who is said to have excavated a canal in Kalinga "three hundred years before" the fifth regnal year of Kharavela, may be assigned to 165+300=465 B.C. His initial date may be earlier than 465, say 470 B.C. The *Puranas* give Udayin, the immediate predecessor of Nandivardhana, thirty-three years of reign, Darsaka, twenty-four years, Ajatasatru, twenty-seven years, and Bimbisara, twenty-eight years. Adding up we get 470+33+24+27+28=582 for the commencement of Bimbisara's reign and 554 for that of Ajatasatru's. This, says Dr. Smith, confirms the tradition of the Buddha's contemporaneity with both Bimbisara and Ajatasatru, and there is no improbability in placing the Buddha's decease in 543 B.C. But as the *Puranas* give discrepant reign-periods, Dr. Smith's combination of reign-periods to prove his point is more subjective than objective. The vital flaw in this chronological scheme is that placing Nandivardhana in 470 B.C. would cause an interval of 470—325=145 years between him and Chandragupta Maurya To allow one hundred and forty-five years for Nandivardhana, Mahanandin and Mahapadma and his sons—four generations—is historiographically uncanonical. Moreover, the expression "300 years before" in the Kharavela record is now read as "in the year 103 of the Nanda era." Therefore the attempt to back up the traditional date of the Buddha's death is futile. Further the Saisunaga-Nanda chronology is by no means certain. The discrepancies between the *Puranas* and the Ceylonese Chronicles as regards chronology and

genealogy are hard to reconcile. Though we prefer the Puranic authority, its chronology is clean untenable—three hundred and twenty-one years for ten Saisunagas and one hundred years for two generations of Nandas. We may allow only three hundred years for all the twelve generations, twenty-five years for each reign. On this basis (1) Sisunaga must have reigned from 625--600, (2) Kakavarna, 600—575, (3) Kshemadharman, 575—550, (4) Kshatraujas, 550—525, (5) Bimbisara, 525—500, (6) Ajatasatru, 500—475, (7) Darsaka, 475—450, (8) Udayin, 450—425, (9) Nandivardhana, 425—400, (10) Mahanandin, 400—375, and (11 & 12) Mahapadma and his sons, 375—325. This conjectural chronology does not support 470 B C. for Nandivardhana, though it would harmonise with the traditional synchronism of the Buddha with Bimbisara and Ajatasatru.

Another Method. The date 543 B. C. is arrived at in another way. Identifying the Piyadasi of the Ceylonese Chronicles with Chandragupta Maurya, some scholars take the figure 218 as the interval in years between his accession and the Buddha's decease, which consequently must have happened in 325+218 = 543 B C. But the Ceylonese Chronicles refer definitely to Asoka Piyadasi, and though the *Mudrarakshasa* refers to Chandragupta Maurya as *Priyadarsi*, the Piyadasi *par excellence* is undoubtedly Asoka Therefore the traditional date of the Buddha's *nirvana* is the offspring of a confusion of the date of Asoka's coronation with that of his grandfather's accession

Historicity of the Buddha. A few scholars like Senart, Barth and Franke question the historicity of the Buddha and regard him as the sun-god, his twelve-fold chain of causation as the twelve months, his son Rahula as the eclipse, Mara as darkness, etc.* But the epithet *adityabandhu* applied to the Buddha indicates

* E. J. Thomas, *The Life of Buddha* (1927), pp. 216 17.

that he was a person belonging to the *suryavamsa*. The Pali Canon says in one place that he is neither a god nor a man; in another place he is described as the ascetic Gautama. Asoka says in his Rummindei inscription: "here was born the Buddha Sakyamuni." The inscription in Asokan script on the urn with remains of bones at Piprawa near Kapilavastu reads as follows: "this is the relic-treasury of the Lord Buddha of the Sakyas." Therefore the story of Gautama is not a solar myth, and his historicity is now recognised by almost all scholars.

Career. Siddhartha Gautama, Sakyasimha or Sakyamuni, was the son of Raja Suddhodana of the Sakya clan and Mayadevi. His mother dying seven days after his birth at Kapilavastu (on the Nepalese border of the Basti District, U. P., west of Padaria in Nepal), Mahaprajapati, Mayadevi's sister, became his foster-mother. In due course he married his cousin Yasodhara. The sights of an old man, a diseased man, a dead man, and a saint turned his attention to the troubles and bondage of human life. The German philosopher, Nietzsche, admires the Buddha, but ridicules his sensitiveness to human misery as unmanly and un-Aryan!* The news of his son Rahula's birth was received by him with the remark that he had been bound by another chain. At the age of twenty-nine years he abandoned the comforts of the palace and wandered from place to place in ascetic garb. After trying in vain two teachers, he began serious penance under a fig tree (which became famous later as the Bodhi or Bo tree) at a place called Bodh-Gaya later. After seven years of meditation he became enlightened and resisted the temptations of Mara, the Buddhist Satan. He proceeded to Benares and delivered his first sermon which set in motion the *dhamma-chakka* or the Wheel of the Law. At Rajagriha he enlisted Sariputta and

* F. Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra* (George Allen & Unwin, Complete Works, Vol. XI, 1923), p. 50.

Moggallana, then his cousins Ananda and Devadatta, and subsequently Anuruddha and Upali, as his disciples. Ananda in due course became his Boswell, and Devadatta, the Buddhist Judas. After strenuous endeavours for more than forty years, he died at Kusinagara (Kasia in the Gorakhpur District U. P.) after partaking of the hospitality at Pava (not the place of Mahavira Vardhamana's death) of a smith named Chunda. It is said that his death was caused by the consumption of pork at his last dinner, but the expression *sukaramaddava* usually translated as "tender pork" is taken by some scholars to mean "something relished by the boar," *i.e.*, an edible fungus.*

Criticism. The later biographies of the Buddha like the *Lalitavistara* and Asvaghosha's *Buddhacharita* are of a legendary character, and regard him as a god. Even the earliest accounts of him in the Pali Canon represent him as a miracle-worker and thought-reader and attribute to him feats of levitation. After excluding the miraculous elements like his descent from heaven, his virgin birth, the reversal of the course of Nature at his birth, etc., the work of historical criticism begins. His Ikshvaku lineage as well as his princely origin is called in question, but there is no doubt that he was a Sakya Kshatriya. The story of his luxurious life in three palaces is discounted, and the four sights which are believed to have confronted him on the eve of his renunciation are interpreted broadly as his contemplation on old age, sickness, death and asceticism. Anyhow the central fact of his great renunciation is undeniable. His rigorous austerities are interpreted as the wrong way of seeking enlightenment, and his enlightenment as nothing but his gaining knowledge of the right method of concentration. Neither the Bodhi tree nor the temptation of

* Fa Chow, *Sukaramaddava and the Buddha's Death (Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Vol. XXIII, 1942, pp. 127-33).

Mara is mentioned in the authentic accounts. The reliability of his first sermon at Benares on the Four Truths and the Eight-fold Path is vouched for by its verbal accuracy in several parts of the Pali Canon and in Sanskrit versions. The Buddha's itinerary after his enlightenment at Bodh-Gaya is as follows: Benares, Rajagriha, Sravasti, Vaisali, Rajagriha, Sravasti, Rajagriha, Nalanda, Pataligrama, Vaisali, Pava and Kusinagara; here we get an idea of the cradle of Buddhism. It is doubtful whether he visited Kausambi. There is no basis for his alleged visits to Kashmir, Kanchi or Ceylon. The *Mahaparinibbanasutta* describes his last journey, and contains some historical materials. At Vaisali, he said: "The Doctrine and Discipline, Ananda, which I have taught and enjoined upon you is to be your teacher when I am gone."* His farewell talks to Ananda in tears are largely historical. The Buddha's last words are: "Subject to decay are compound things: strive with earnestness." In spite of the miraculous and other unhistorical elements confronting us from start to finish, the earliest account of the career of Gautama after his enlightenment is more reliable than that of his birth and early life.

SECTION III. THE BUDDHA'S SASANA AND SANGHA

The Four Truths. The quintessence of the Buddha's *sasana* or teaching is found in his famous Benares sermon, the preface to which sets its face against self-torture. The four Aryan truths (*chattari ariya sachchani*) are dukkha or unhappiness; *samudaya* or cause; *nirodha* or suppression; and *magga* or path. The first truth is that life is unhappy; human tears are more abundant than the waters of the oceans. But life is precious, and therefore the Buddha prohibited suicide. The evils of life are old age, sickness, death, submission to hateful things and

* H. C. Warren, *Buddhism in Translations* (1896), p. 107.

separation from beloved objects. The ideal life is one of self-sacrifice and love. The second truth is that craving causes unhappiness. This is explained in the chain of causation, which in its negative form gives the third truth, *viz.*, the suppression of unhappiness. The fourth truth is the path leading to that suppression—the eight-fold path (*atthangika magga*), which is as follows: (1) Right views or knowledge of the four truths; (2) Right resolve or the resolve to give up pleasure and do no harm to any living being; (3) Right speech is avoidance of untruth and slander and of bad words and foolish talk; (4) Right conduct is abstention from killing, stealing and immorality; (5) Right livelihood is that which does not injure any living being; (6) Right effort is to keep the mind in a state conducive to good thoughts; (7) Right mindfulness is the disciplining of the mind in order to acquire full self-control with the aid of self-knowledge; (8) and Right concentration is *samadhi* or ecstasy; to sum up, a good heart and a pure mind conducive to good action and ecstasy. A man can secure happiness by his own efforts, ethical and intellectual, without ritualism or metaphysical speculation. The eight-fold path is called the middle path as it is midway between the two extremes of sensual pleasure and bodily torture. The Buddha did not emphasise asceticism or *ahimsa* to any absurd extent because he learnt the lesson of moderation from his own experience. He concentrated on the practical problem of *mukti* or salvation, and did not aim at the discovery of ultimate truth. So he discouraged fruitless speculations on the soul, the absolute, etc., and said: "The religious life does not depend on the dogma that the world is eternal. The Tathagata (Buddha) is free from all theories."*

Karma and Impermanence. The Buddha introduced his ethical idea into the Brahmanical doctrine of *karma*

* *Ibid.*, pp. 121 and 125.

and saw only things impermanent (*anichcha*) in a world of change and transmigration.

Anatta and Causation. The importance of the doctrine of *anatta* or non-soul is clear from its being the theme of the Buddha's second sermon. By denying the existence of a permanent soul, he repudiated the Upanishadic dogma of the immortal *atman*. He has been charged with inconsistency on the ground that transmigration, which he accepted, would be impossible without a permanent soul. But an individual may transmigrate whether he has an *atman* or only *sankharas* or predispositions, which conduce to rebirth. According to the doctrine of *patichcha-samuppada* or dependent origination, whatever has a beginning or origin has also an end, and nothing happens without a cause. If things in this world are impermanent and if life is nothing but unhappiness, is life "a chaos of shadows"? No, the law of causation is universal. The twelve-fold chain runs as follows. "From ignorance come the *sankharas*, from the *sankharas* comes consciousness, from consciousness come name and form, from name and form come the six provinces of the senses, from the six provinces comes contact, from contact comes sensation, from sensation comes craving, from craving comes clinging, from clinging comes existence, from existence comes birth, from birth come old age and death, pain and lamentation, suffering, unhappiness and despair." Thus, as in the *Upanishads*, unhappiness is attributed ultimately to *avidya* or ignorance. "The law of universal causation....is the chief contribution of Buddhism to Indian thought.....After all the trouble of modern philosophy, causation is not defined in more adequate terms."*

Nirvana and Arhatship. The much discussed word *nirvana* literally means "blowing out." While some scholars equate it with annihilation, others regard it as

* S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy* (1929), I, pp. 370-71.

a final happy state from which there is no return and interpret it as emancipation, liberation etc The Buddha advisedly refrained from discussing questions like the eternity of the world and the existence of saints after their death, because " they profit not, they have not to do with the fundamentals of religion," because answers to them would not conduce to the extinction of passion, the acquisition of knowledge or the attainment of peace " The ultimately real is *nirvana* It is not stated in such a way that it can be identified with God (the Supreme Being), but it may be said to be feeling after an expression of the same truth "* The goal of Buddhism is *nibbana* or *nirvana* of which two kinds are distinguished An *arhat* is a saint who has attained *nibbana* and is alive (*jivanmukta*), at his death he attains *parinibbana*, though some scholars deny this distinction and say that *nibbana* is a state and that *parinibbana* is attainment of that state † The Buddha regarded *arhats* as superior to gods Four paths or steps to sanctity are mentioned *Sotapanno*, one who has entered the stream by giving up faith in a permanent soul, doubt and belief in rutual, etc, and the number of his rebirths will not exceed seven *Sakadagamin*, one who has almost conquered lust and hate and who has only one more rebirth *Anagamin*, one who has completely overcome lust and hate and does not return to this world, and *Arhat*, one who is devoid of all impurities including craving and pride and who enjoys the bliss of *nirvana*.

Co Founders of Buddhism Mrs Rhys Davids contends that the doctrines of early Buddhism are not homogeneous, that the " inspired message for the welfare of the many appealing simply and directly to the very nature of every man and woman " is certainly that of

* Thomas *op cit* p 208
† Thomas *The History of Buddhist Thought* (1933), pp 21 22 *n*.

the Buddha; that contributions to his religion were made also by Kondanna, Vappa, Bhaddaji, Mahanama, Assaji (the first five disciples of the Buddha), Sariputta and Moggallana; and that the theory of causation was Assaji's contribution.* The aim of the Maha-Bodhi Society founded at Colombo in 1891 is to go back to original Buddhism. "The original teaching of Gautama, revived and purified, may yet play a large part in the direction of human destiny" (H. G. Wells).

Bhikkhus, Theras or Monks. The Buddha made regulations for his Sangha (Order of monks and nuns) as the occasion for them arose, and they related to religious practices, discipline, food, dress, medicine, etc., and to punishments for their violation. Such regulations are found in the *Vinayapitaka;* the *Patimokkha* contains 227 rules. As a teacher of the middle path, the Buddha steered clear of luxury and discomfort. The Order founded by him for spreading his teaching, preaching and converting, became well organised before his decease, and guaranteed the permanence of his religion; it later proved to be an efficient instrument of religious conquest. The monks "took refuge" in the Buddha, the *Dhamma* and the Sangha—*tiratna, saranattayam* (*tisaranam*) or three gems, three refuges—and were bound by the Ten Commandments (*dasasikkhapada*): Avoid destruction of life; theft; sexual impurity; untruth; intoxicants; eating at improper times; dancing, music and theatres; garlands, perfumes, ornaments, etc.; high or broad beds; and acceptance of gold and silver. Their possessions were restricted to yellow rags, belts, begging-bowls, razors, and needles to mend their clothes; and it was the duty of the laity to support them and come into fruitful contact with them. The Buddha thought that the religious ideal could be intensively pursued only by those who had given up matrimony and worldly life and joined the Order. The

* *J.R.A.S.*, 1927, pp. 193-203.

monks were *sannyasins*, not priests The regulations for their guidance do not provide for any worship or religious ceremony, or for any vow of obedience No rank was recognised among them except seniority and recruitment to the Sangha was from all ranks of society

Famous Monks The famous disciples of the Buddha among monks were Sariputta, specially proficient in *Abhidhamma* and entrusted with the administration of the Order, Moggallana, the master of *iddhi* or magic (both predeceased the Master), Ananda, who is said to have remembered every word uttered by the Buddha and whose speciality was *Dhamma*, Anuruddha, who on the death of the Master encouraged the disconsolate monks including the weeping Ananda, Mahakassapa, famous for his austere and active religious life, Upali the Barber, who mastered the *Vinaya* so well that he formulated rules for its interpretation, Mahakachchayana, Mahal appina, etc

Bhikkhunis, Theris or Nuns The Buddha's original unwillingness to admit women to the Sangha was due not to his distrust of their intellectual ability, of their morals or of their spirituality, but to his fear that nuns might establish their ascendancy over the Sangha. He said "Women are competent Ananda if they retire from household life to the houseless one, to attain to saintship" * Ananda's advocacy of their cause triumphed The rules for monks were applicable to nuns who were also bound by eight special regulations for ensuring their subordination to monks Though nuns were not unknown before his time, the Buddha gave a fillip to the cause of their equality in spiritual effort. His experiment was justified by their commendable activity, reflected to some extent in the *Therigatha* or Songs of the Sisters It is a collection of the verses of 73 nuns We learn from it that various reasons drove women into the nunnery the beauty of the *Dhamma* expounded by the Buddha and his

* Warren *op cit* p 444

disciples, and desire for freedom from unhappiness, mental, moral, social or domestic—want or loss of children, widowhood, public infamy, cloying luxury, poverty, domestic drudgery, unsuitable husbands, etc. Mutta expresses her glorious freedom from three crooked things—quern, mortar and her hunchbacked husband.* The seven famous women of early Buddhism were Khema, Uppalavanna, Patachara, Bhadda Kundalakesa, Kisagotami, Dhammadinna and Visakha; the first two were the foremost of the disciples of the Buddha among women; the first six were nuns; and the last was a lay woman. Ambapali was a foundling courtezan of Vaisali, whose invitation to dinner was accepted by the Buddha in preference to that of the Lichchhavis and who became a nun.†

Upasakas and Upasikas or the Laity. The lay disciples, male and female, did not belong to the Sangha. They expressed their faith in the *triratna*. The Buddha did not attempt to control their temporal affairs. The Five Commandments for them were the same as the first five of the Ten Commandments for monks and nuns, except that, in the case of the former, sexual impurity meant adultery. Though the *upasakas* and *upasikas* were exhorted to conform as far as possible to the ideals of the Sangha, the Buddha in their case emphasised domestic and social virtues. The *Sigalovadasutta*,‡ which teaches one's duties towards one's parents, teachers, wife and children, friends, servants, and monks and Brahmans, gives the key to the sermons of Asoka; the Buddha concludes: "Liberality, courtesy, benevolence, unselfishness, under all circumstances and towards all men—these qualities are to the world what the linchpin is to the rolling chariot." His great lay disciples were Anathapindika, the Setthi of

* Mrs Rhys Davids, *The Therigatha*, p. 15.

† B. C. Law, *Buddhist Women*, *I.A.*, 1928, pp. 49-54, 65-68 and 86-89.

‡ *I.A.*, 1883, pp. 23-26.

Sravasti renowned for his unique support to the Master and his sect, and Visakha, who belonged to Anga and lived with her husband at Sravasti She converted her father in law Migara to Buddhism, and he regarded her as his mother, hence her appellation of "Migaramata"

SECTION IV THE LIGHT OF ASIA

Character and Personality It is possible to derive a picture of the character and personality of the Buddha from the Pali Canon, though it somewhat obscures his human aspect The great thing about him is that he preached what he practised and asked his followers to do as far as possible what he did Sincerity and candour formed the basis of his personality He was strong and handsome, and his voice was pleasant and inspiring His appearance was serene and majestic "He would have made a good general, if he had not become a monk"* He was compassionate, peaceful, tactful, reasonable and wise He was a kind master giving individual attention to his pupils particularly to the sick He was not perturbed by the murderous intentions of Devadatta He regarded even righteous indignation as wrong "Disciples, even if highway robbers with a two handed saw shall take and dismember you limb by limb whoso grow darkened in mind thereby would not be fulfilling my injunctions Those robbers will we permeate with streams of loving thought unfailing" He became famous as "the Great Tamer of untamed hearts" His self confidence, courage, moral earnestness and sweet reasonableness were coupled with unbounded love for men women, children and animals Though the monks were to discard women in order to eradicate their passions and attain the saintly ideal, the Master emphasised the value of domestic virtues for householders His fascinating personality and benevolent smile put every one who approached him in good

* Sir Charles Eliot, *Hinduism and Buddhism* (1921), I, p 171

humour. He was a great psychologist who advised people after analysing their minds, and his insight into human nature was profound. In debate he was calm, dignified and courteous. As a preacher, he was admirable; he went to the root of the matter, possessed a sense of humour, and reinforced his conclusions by parables and similes. In short, his was a magnetic personality, and his character and teaching made him the Light of Asia (Sir Edwin Arnold), the Light not of Asia only but of the World (Mrs. Rhys Davids).

Compared with Christ. As embodiments of the spirit of criticism and wisdom, Gautama Buddha and Jesus Christ turned against ritual, theology and metaphysics and refrained from interference in polities. Both held that hatred could be conquered only by love, emphasised purity of mind, extolled the merciful and the peace-makers, and were good to the poor and the despised. Both regenerated fallen women and were truly spiritual teachers. But the teaching of Christ is emotional and the Buddha's, intellectual. The latter regarded the world as ignorant rather than wicked. The foundation of the Sangha perpetuated Buddhism, but Christ established no Order. "The Buddha's Eight-fold Path...resembles the Sermon on the Mount more than does any other moral system.....The barrier which separates the Buddha from Christ is due, in the last resort, more to the intellectual theories which he inherited than to disagreement in the findings of his own very original moral insight. Where the Buddha was most himself, there he was most like Christ."*

Gautama as Ethicist. The Buddha was a sovereign ethicist who prescribed for lay folk a simple religion identical with morality and open to all and for monks and nuns a moral and intellectual discipline. "Few moralists

* Canon Streeter, *The Buddha and the Christ* (1932), pp. 68 and 71.

have ever laid more stress on the inwardness of true morality than did Gautama "* It is to be noted that 'even the repudiation of the Atman theory has an ethical motive † The Buddha encouraged his lay followers to distribute their charity among all religious denominations and show absolutely no religious intolerance He was against unnatural forms of asceticism and nudity, and stressed the dignity of the human personality His middle path sufficiently refutes the charge that his ethics is as etic but his contemporaries did not at all think so He said that there was true impurity not in meat eating but in theft adultery, cruelty, lack of charity etc In short he wanted that the body should be attended to but no attachment to it was to be developed Another charge against Buddhist ethics is that of intellectualism In *order to root out avidya, the Buddha stressed knowledge*, he did not mean by it theoretical learning but *jnana* or knowledge arising from moral discipline coupled with intellectual effort He emphasised that his disciples should themselves "see" the truth and not accept it on his authority He discountenanced exercises in contemplation if they did not lead to practical goodness.

Rationalist and Scientist The Buddha rejected revelation and employed reason for getting at the truth With the aid of experience and logic he aimed at establishing a religion and banishing scepticism and superstition He taught men how to obtain *nirvana*, but did not profess himself to liberate them. He regarded the world not as chaotic but as subject to law and order thanks to the universality of the law of causation His doctrines of impermanence and *anatta* are in consonance with the teaching of Science Modern Physics regards matter not as "static stuff but radiant energy" Modern Psychology speaks of mind energy Modern Astronomy does not regard even

* J B. Pratt, *India and its Faiths* p 413
† Radhakrishnan *op cit* p 418

the Sun as eternal. Modern Biology treats man as a single genus and species. The Buddha says in the *Suttanipata* that there are many species among plants and animals with their characteristic marks, but among men there are no such species. He was scientific also in regarding differences in human pigmentation as unreal. In short, his reliance on experience and reason and his rejection of authority make his attitude towards life thoroughly modern. "His method and spirit are essentially scientific.....He alone of founders and prophets turned away from all supernatural sources of knowledge and attempted to think the thing out for himself, and to recommend his doctrine to others only because it was scientifically verifiable by an appeal to experience."*

Pessimist and Atheist. The Buddha is regarded as a pessimist on account of his doctrine of unhappiness. Every religion recognises the existence of evil in the world and starts with a sad picture of human affairs. No doubt the Buddha underlined the load of human unhappiness. But at the same time he recognised the glory of a life of purity, love and detachment and of a bliss beyond. He was a staunch optimist in so far as he believed that ethical discipline could effect a radical cure of evil. He was a firm believer in human goodness, progress and perfection, and his conception of man's nature is not only anti-Hobbesian, but also very exalted. He exhorted his followers to conquer evil. He recognised the existence of gods like Brahma and Sakka (Indra), but regarded them as imperfect and inferior to *arhats* or emancipated saints. Did he believe in a Supreme Being as the creator of the world or as the controller of *karma*? No, *karma* can itself act; it "acts as a very pragmatic god."† The Buddha recognised an absolutely real, and his position corresponds to, if it is not identical with, that

* Pratt, *op. cit.*, pp. 387 and 398.
† *Ibid.*, p. 410.

of the Upanishadic seers. Still his vague and ambiguous utterances regarding the Supreme Being led after his decease, *and in spite of his counsel, to his deification*, and thus the instinct of man requiring a god asserted itself.

to sacrifice and ritual, in his conception of unhappiness and impermanence, in his theory of *karma*, in his emphasis on *avidya* as the root cause of unhappiness, and, above all, in his stand that the absolute is incomprehensible by the intellect—*nirvana* and *nirguna Brahman*. Hence he is said to have democratised the Upanishadic teaching. Some scholars emphasise the influence of Sankhya on early Buddhist thought. It is even said that Kapilavastu, the place of the Buddha's birth, was named after Kapila, the founder of Sankhya. Both schools are against revelation and ritual, stress reason and knowledge, and are indifferent to God and theology. The four truths of Sankhya are: pain; deliverance from pain; the cause of pain is want of discrimination between *prakriti* and *purusha;* and discerning knowledge effects deliverance. The Yoga system is characterised by asceticism and detachment from all comforts of life. It applies to spiritual healing the four fundamental truths of Indian medicine: *roga* or disease; *rogahetu* or cause of disease; *arogyam* or health; and *bhaishajyam* or medicine. The twelve *nidanas* (causes) of Buddhism remind us of the *Nidanasastra* or Pathology. In spite of these similarities, the question of Gautama's indebtedness to Sankhya-Yoga is complicated by the fact that he was a systematiser, whereas Sankhya-Yoga was systematised long after his age. In the organisation of the Sangha the Buddha was guided by the rules of the Brahmanical Order of *sannyasins*. As regards his teaching, the Eight-fold Path and the chain of causation possess only selective originality. He modified the doctrine of *karma* and placed tremendous emphasis on impermanence. His doctrine of *anatta* is opposed to the teaching of the *Upanishads*, of Sankhya-Yoga and of Jainism. His persistence in leaving some questions undetermined is original; his spirit of proselytism, his stress on the value of confession of sins, and the universality of his gospel are substantially new. His organisation of the Order is selectively original, and his admission to it of

women largely original Above all his character and personality are unique

Causes of the Buddha's Success The success of the Buddha was due to his character and personality, to his *Dhamma* which was suited to the needs of his age to the convictions and earnestness of the members of the Sangha, and to their devotion to the Master and his gospel In this connection some scholars emphasise Gautama's birth as a Sakya Kshatriya in Eastern India an enlightened part of Northern India the Brahmanical system had not been so well established as in the Upper Ganges Valley

Effects of Gautama's Advent The personality and teaching of Gautama produced far reaching effects The system of Vedic sacrifices received a stunning blow and the doctrine of *ahimsa* obtained wider currency The Vaishnava and Saiva *bhakti* cults developed stressed devotion to a personal god and rejected animal sacrifices and ritualism The Brahmanical caste system began to be rigid and its rules were codified in the *Sutras* The Buddha's non committal attitude towards the undetermined questions led to his later followers fathering their ideas upon him Thus the doctrine of *nirvana* was transformed into *sunyavada* or nihilism and his doctrine of impermanence (*anichchavada*) into *kshanikavada* or doctrine of momentariness Brahmanical orthodoxy embraced the atheistic Mimamsaka and the rationalist follower of Sankhya who had no faith in the *Vedas* called the Buddha an atheist for denying the authority of the *Vedas* though he never denied the existence of gods or the absolute defined the terms *nastika* and *astika* inconsistently and spited the Grand Rebel

SECTION V MAHAVIRA VARDHAMANA

Date of Mahavira c 539—c 467 B C Dr Smith accepts the traditional date of Mahavira's *nirvana* 470 years before the Vikrama era i e 470 + 57 = 527 B C, for the reasons adduced for his acceptance of the tradi

tional date of the Buddha's death, seeing that tradition makes the Buddha and Mahavira contemporaries. Rejecting 527 B.C., for the reasons already explained, the grounds for Dr. Jacobi's suggestion, 467 B.C., accepted by Dr. Charpentier, may be regarded as satisfactory. According to a Jain tradition recorded by Hemachandra, the Jain polyhistor of the 12th century A.D., there was an interval of 410 years between Mahavira and the Vikrama era (58-57 B.C.). Therefore Mahavira must have died in $57 + 410 = 467$ B.C. But he is also placed 155 years before Chandragupta Maurya. If 155 is deducted from 467, we get 312 B.C. for Chandragupta's accession, for which such a late date is untenable. Another Jain tradition mentions 170 years as the interval between Mahavira's death and that of Bhadrabahu, the Jain patriarch. The latter is closely associated in Jain Literature with Chandragupta Maurya, who is said to have abdicated and migrated to Mysore along with his *guru*, Bhadrabahu. The pontiff died a little after the Jain settlement in the South. So on the basis of Chandragupta's abdication in $325-24 = 301$ B.C., and allowing a few years for the Jain migration from Northern India and settlement in Mysore, say four years, we may fix 301 $-4 = 297$ B. C., for Bhadrabahu's death. Therefore Mahavira must have left this world in $297 + 170 = 467$ B.C. The *Jainacharitra* of the *Kalpasutra* mentions its compilation nine hundred and ninety-three years after Mahavira, and its public recital, after its completion, before Dhruvasena I of Valabhi. As he ascended the throne in A.D. 526, Mahavira must have expired in $993-526 = 467$ B.C. The tradition that he lived for seventy-two years enables us to place his birth in $467 + 72 = 539$ B.C. A third date for Mahavira's decease is suggested by the tradition that it happened four hundred and seventy years before the Vikrama era, which in this case, it is argued, should be regarded as Ananda Vikrama era, starting in A.D. 33, *i.e.*, ninety years (the total of the

reign periods of the Nandas according to the Hindi poet, Chand) after the Saṁvat Vikrama era (58 57 B C) Therefore Mahavira must have attained *nirvana* in 470—33=437 B C* But such a late date is opposed to the persistent tradition that Mahavira was contemporary with Bimbisara and Ajatasatru

Life of Vardhamana The life of Mahavira handed down to us is so legendary and to some extent so similar to the life of the Buddha that we cannot attach much value to the details He was born at Kundagrama a suburb of the town of Vaisali son of Siddhartha and Trisala As his father was the leader of the *jnatrika* clan of Kshatriyas the Buddhists refer to Vardhamana as *Nataputta* He married Yasoda and after the birth of a daughter, turned his attention away from profane things His homeless life began at thirty after the death of his parents and twelve years were devoted to rigorous penance in the course of which he realised the spiritual value of self torture and nudity In his forty second year he reached omniscience and became the *Jina* (the conqueror) or Mahavira (the great hero) Then began his career as a preacher and his followers were called *nirgranthas* (those who have broken the worldly ties) During the remaining thirty years of his life, the sphere of his activity was Magadha and Anga and occasionally other chief centres of civilization in Northern India He came into close contact with Bimbisara and Ajatasatru, and after much struggle inside his Order, and outside with the Buddha and his followers he died at Pava near Rajagriha twenty years after the Buddha's demise His religion is called Jainism though on the analogy of Buddhism it should be called "Jinism" or on the analogy of Jainism we should speak of "Bauddhism"

right conduct. Right faith is firm belief in the omniscience and infallibility of Mahavira. Right knowledge is comprehension of the theory that there is no God and that the world has always been existing without a Creator, together with the recognition of the existence of innumerable independent souls, of the validity of the doctrine of *karma*, and of the capacity of asceticism to destroy *karma*. Right conduct for the clergy is scrupulous fulfilment, in thought, word and deed, of the five great vows—not to injure life, not to lie, not to steal, not to perform the sexual act, and not to be selfish, rich or worldly—supplemented by positive conduct conducive to self-discipline, confession, humility, obedience, meditation and study. For the laity the injunction is to avoid flagrant violation of the *ahimsa* doctrine, gross untruth, theft and robbery, adultery and greed, with which are coupled a few positive directions: protection of living creatures, careful choice of occupation—even agriculture is sinful as it causes injury to the earth, worms and animals—, practice of charity and voluntary starvation. Even inanimate things are invested with the soul; ascetic ways are pursued with a vengeance; and the *ahimsa* principle is carried to the extent of undervaluing human personality. In these three respects, Jainism occupies an extreme position. Its Sangha consists of the clergy and laity of both sexes. This organic social bond is a master-stroke of Mahavira's genius for organisation. In prosperity and adversity the clergy enjoyed the unstinted support of the laity. The Jain Order was, however, not organised with a single eye to propaganda, though conversion was its objective.

Mahavira as Reformer. Mahavira, the twenty-fourth *Tirthankara* (Path-finder or Prophet), was the reformer of the sect of Parsva, who is said to have lived two hundred and fifty years before Vardhamana. Though he was the Buddha's junior contemporary, the religion reformed by him is regarded as older than Parsva, the

The Puranas. The *pancalakshanas* (five characteristics) of the *Puranas* are *sarga* (creation of the world), *pratisarga* (recreation), *vamsa* (genealogy of gods and saints), *manvantara* (ages of Manu) and *vamsanucharita* (dynastic history). The penultimate and last items are concerned with geography and history respectively. Thus, to some extent, the *Puranas* are professedly historical documents, supplying us with royal genealogy and reign-periods along with a few historical facts, from the very beginning to the age of the Guptas. They use the past, present and future tenses in the narration of events. Dr. Smith has shown the historical value of the *Matsya Purana* with regard to the Satavahana dynasty. But owing to textual corruptions they make inconsistent statements. Sometimes they treat contemporary dynasties as successive, and do not discriminate between *major* and *minor* powers. Moreover, they were composed in the Gupta epoch. They omit a few dynasties like the Kushans and the Kshatrapas. Above all, they allow an interval of about 2500 years between the Mauryas and the Guptas—an error evidently due to the confusion between contemporary and successive dynasties. But their testimony is sometimes corroborated by Buddhist and Jain traditions and by archaeological evidence. Still it is going too far to regard the *Puranas* as historical records of independent value. But Pargiter argues that they are generally trustworthy on the ground that the Pauranikas (their authors) could distinguish between truth and untruth, that it would be unbelievable if the memory of great kings had been entirely lost among a civilized people, and that ancient Indian genealogists could be trusted to have preserved royal genealogies with substantial accuracy, if the Brahmans could preserve the *Vedas* with verbal accuracy. He lays down the dictum that the Puranic tradition is to be rejected, if at all, on specific grounds and for valid reasons, as its general credibility is unassail-

able* But this is the criterion we apply to first rate historical materials In the present condition of Puranic study, we cannot regard their data as such materials Still as Rapson observes "the *Puranas* have preserved in however perverted and distorted a form an independent tradition which supplements the priestly tradition of the *Vedas* and the *Brahmanas*, and which goes back to the same period "†

The Saisunaga Nanda Genealogy and Chronology The Puranas give us vague traditions of Vedic genealogy, claiming for kings lunar and solar descent which cannot be harmonised with Vedic traditions until the reign of Parikshit who is placed about thirty six years after the Mahabharata war (about 1000 B C) Other dates have been suggested 3139 3102, 1424 1400 1197,‡ 950 B C,§ etc After that war three dynasties are continued—the Purus the Ikshvakus, and the rulers of Magadha The value of the *Puranas* increases with the advent of the Saisunagas of Magadha Of the three lists of these kings, Puranic, Buddhist and Jain, the last is incomplete and the other two reveal such fundamental discrepancies that it is very trying to reconcile their genealogical and chronological data In this connection the superiority on general grounds of Northern Indian tradition to Ceylonese Buddhist tradition should be recognised We have to choose between two defective lists and scholars are ranged on either side Taking all the data into consideration we

* Pargiter *op cit* pp 119 25

† *C.H I* I p 302

‡ K. L Daftari *The Astronomical Method and Its Application to the Chronology of Ancient India* (1942), p 131

§ Pargiter, *op cit*, p 182

have to decide our preference and adjust the chronology accordingly. The data may be tabulated as follows:—

The Matsya Purana.			The Ceylonese Chronicles.		
S. No.	King.	Reign-period : years.	S. No.	King.	Reign-period : years.
1.	Sisunaga	40	1.	Bimbisara	52
2.	Kakavarna	26	2.	Ajatasatru	32
3.	Kshemadharman	36	3.	Udayin	16
4.	Kshatraujas	24	4.	Anuruddha }	8
5.	Bimbisara	28	5.	Munda }	
6.	Ajatasatru	27	6.	Nagadasaka	24
7.	Darsaka	24	7.	Sisunaga	18
8.	Udayin	33	8.	Kalasoka	28
9.	Nandivardhana	40	9.	His ten sons	22
10.	Mahanandin	43	10.	Nine Nandas	22
11.	Mahapadma	88			
12.	His eight sons	12			
	Total ...	421			222

Criticism. Sisunga, Bimbisara, Ajatasatru, Udayin and the nine Nandas are common to both lists. Kakavarna may be identified with Kalasoka and Darsaka with Nagadasaka. It is improper to doubt the historicity of names which do not sound well like Kalasoka (Black Asoka), Kakavarna (crow-coloured), and Munda (shaveling). In both lists Bimbisara is followed by Ajatasatru and Sisunaga by Kakavarna or Kalasoka, the Nandas coming last. But the founder of the dynasty is Sisunaga in one case and Bimbisara in the other. The reference by Bana to Kakavarna Sisunagi supports the Puranic statement. The total of the reign-periods is markedly different; the Puranic average is about thirty-five years for each king and the Buddhist about twenty years. The Puranic list gives eleven names and a group of eight brothers; the other list, eight names, a group of ten brothers, and another group of nine; nineteen against twenty-seven in all; from this point of view the average is twenty-two

years (421 by 19) as against eight years (222 by 27). Therefore the Buddhist figure is too low. Further, in the Puranic and Buddhist lists, Sisunaga gets forty and eighteen years respectively; Kakavarna-Kalasoka, twenty-six and twenty-eight; Bimbisara, twenty-eight and fifty-two; Ajatasatru, twenty-seven and thirty-two; and Udayin, thirty-three and sixteen; but Darsaka-Nagadasaka, twenty-four in both. Regarding the Nandas, the discrepancy is abnormal—hundred in one case and twenty-two in the other. With reference to the Buddhist list, Dr. Rhys Davids remarks: "It must be confessed that the numbers seem much too regular with their multiples of six and eight, to be very probably in accordance with fact."* Further, the story of a line of five parricides from Ajatasatru to Nagadasaka tends to discredit that list. The historicity of Darsaka, doubted by some Buddhist scholars, is vouched for by Bhasa's *Svapnavasavadatta*. Therefore the Puranic list to be preferred on account of its Northern Indian origin, its fuller enumeration of royal names, and its accuracy regarding the founder of the dynasty, though four centuries cannot be allowed for twelve generations On the average of twenty-five years for each reign, three hundred years would not be unreasonable. Numbers nine to twelve of the Puranic list cover nearly two centuries and there must be a serious error here. The Hindi poet, Chand, allows about ninety years for the Nandas, and we may assign a hundred years to the four generations from Nandivardhana, regarding him as a Nanda. The only way out of the difficulty seems to be to accept the Puranic genealogy and allow twenty-five years for each king and another twenty-five years for the eight sons of Mahapadma. This conjectural chronology has already been given. The *Puranas* further help us with a few important facts in connection with the

* *CHI.*, I, p. 190.

political ascendancy of Magadha, and describe Mahapadma as an *charat* or emperor.

The Pali Canon. The term Pali means line or row and conveys the idea of text; it is the language of the early Buddhist Canon or the *T(r)ipitaka*. Though the Pali Canon was committed to writing only in the reign of Vattagamani (*c* 29—*c* 17 B.C.) of Ceylon, much of it must be assigned to the third century B.C. or to an earlier period. It consists of three *Pitakas* (baskets or testaments): *Vinaya, Sutta* and *Abhidhamma*. The *Vinayapitaka* gives and explains the *Patimokkha* rules repeated by monks and nuns during confession once a fortnight; it contains some biographical details relating to the Buddha, accounts of his disciples and of the first two councils, etc. The *Abhidhammapitaka* is concerned with definitions and classifications, and expounds the *Dhamma* in a scholastic manner; it consists of seven books: the *Dhamma-sangani* deals with psychological ethics, and the *Kathavatthu* with controversial questions and false views. The *Suttapitaka* is the most interesting *Pitaka;* it contains the sermons of the Buddha and of his chief disciples to the laity, and is a popular exposition of the *Dhamma* or Law; it consists of five *Nikayas* or Collections.

The Digha Nikaya. The *Digha Nikaya* is a collection of 34 long discourses or *suttas*. The *Brahmajalasutta* explains *sila* or virtue, rejects 62 philosophical speculations on the soul, the annihilation of personality, etc., and throws light on social life by referring to many occupations; we know from it that there was more thinking in the age of the Buddha than is reflected in the *Upanishads*. The *Samannaphalasutta* enumerates the merits of asceticism. The *Ambatthasutta* represents the Kshatriya caste as the highest; still it emphasises that conduct and wisdom are superior to caste; it proves the flexibility of the social system in the age of the Buddha. The *Sonadandasutta* again stresses character and rejects the

importance of birth, colour, knowledge of the *Vedas*, etc. The *Kutadantasutta* sets its face against animal sacrifice and regards the attainment of arhatship as the sweetest and best of all sacrifices The *Lohichchasutta* expresses the view that every one may learn, that any one possessing the necessary qualifications may teach, and that every teacher should teach, without showing "the closed fist" (without concealing anything), all who desire to be taught; it was obviously directed against the exclusiveness of Brahman *gurus* The *Tevijjasutta* points out that "union with God" cannot be attained by impure and sinful men, though they may know the *Vedas*. The *Mahaparinibbana-sutta* describes the peregrinations of the Buddha in his last days, his last talk with Ananda, the Master's death and cremation, the distribution of his relics in eight parts, etc. The *Sigalovadasutta* prescribes the whole duty of the laity, hence it is called the *Gihivinaya* or the *Vinaya* of the householder The *Majjhima Nikaya* is a collection of discourses of medium length, to it belongs the *Kalachupamasutta* or the parable of the saw, which forbids anger in any circumstances The *Samyutta Nikaya* is a collection of "grouped" *suttas*, in which are included the first two sermons of the Buddha. The *Anguttara Nikaya* is a collection of "numerical groupings" intended to emphasise and popularise the *Dhamma*

The Khuddaka Nikaya. The *Khuddaka Nikaya* is a collection of short *suttas*, the chief which are the following The *Dhammapada* or the Path of Virtue is a collection of 423 verses on ethics and contains many famous Buddhist sayings It emphasises the dictum that hatred is conquered only by love, that a virtuous life alone leads to happiness "Let no one forget his own duty for the sake of another's, however great" (the truth stressed in the *Bhagavad Gita* as well). The *Dhammapada* says that "Victory breeds hatred.... ... He who has given up both victory and defeat is happy." The *Suttanipata* again emphasises the ethical character

of Buddhism; lays down the doctrine of universal love and of true friendship; defines real impurity as consisting not in the consumption of flesh, but in slaughter, theft, adultery, etc.; and gives the biological refutation of the caste system. The *Vimanavatthu* and the *Petavatthu* describe the pleasures of heaven and the pains of hell respectively. The *Theragatha* is a collection of the poems of monks, who describe Nature and their own personal experiences, whereas the *Therigatha* contains pictures of social life. The *Jatakas* are stories of the previous lives of the Buddha; about 500 in number, only half of them are Buddhist in origin. They contain fables, fairy tales, humorous, witty and smutty stories, romances, moral tales, etc.; a number of them deal with the wickedness of women and illustrate the moral truths of Buddhism. The *Jataka* tales profoundly influenced Indian sculpture and painting from the third century B.C.; *vide* Bharhut, Sanchi, Ajanta and Amaravati; and their value for social, economic and cultural history is great. Dr. Rhys Davids regards their contents as referable to the pre-Buddhist period; Dr. Fick, to the age of the Buddha; and Dr. Winternitz, to the third century B.C.

Historical Value of the Pitakas. The Pali Canon throws light on the life of the Buddha, his teaching, and his Order. It gives us an idea of the cradle of Buddhism and describes the activities of the great disciples of the Master. It mentions Bimbisara, Ajatasatru and other kings and some of their doings; a number of towns; sixteen Mahajanapadas or great kingdoms: Anga, Magadha, Kasi, Kosala, etc.; republican tribes like the Sakyas; etc. In short, the Pali Canon is very valuable for religious, social, economic, cultural and political history.

Non-Canonical Works. More important than the *Dipavamsa* (4th century A.D.) from the historical and literary points of view is the *Mahavamsa*, the historical

poem composed in the 6th century A D by Mahanaman, a monk both are jointly known as the Ceylonese Chronicles They sketch the religious and dynastic history of Ceylon and refer to the conditions of Northern India They are no longer summarily dismissed as monkish inventions because Dr Geiger has shown that they are based on the historical sections of the older *atthakathas* or commentaries

Other Sources Jain and Foreign The Jain *Agama* or Canon consists of the eleven *Angas* and other works The *Acharanga* gives a full exposition of the right conduct for the clergy and the *Upasakanga* for the laity The *Pattavalis* or succession lists of the chief pontiffs were compiled in the fifth century A D but based on older materials The traditions embodied in the voluminous writings of the Jain monk Hemachandra are occasionally useful It is unfair to level the charge of sectarian prejudice exclusively against Brahmanical Buddhist or Jain chroniclers of Indian tradition Besides the inscriptions of Darius I elucidating his connection with North Western India Herodotus Alexander's historians and Megasthenes have to some extent filled the gap in Indian evidence though for internal affairs it is only occasionally that they are helpful

SECTION VII POLITICAL INTEGRATION IN NORTHERN INDIA

Kingdoms and Republics Sixth Century B C The casual references to the political condition of Northern India in early Buddhist literature reveal a state of affairs similar to 'the political situation at about the same period in Greece' * The chief kingdoms were Kosala, Magadha Avanti and Vatsa until the balance of power was disturbed by the ascendancy of Magadha The triumph of the policy of absorption of neighbouring

* *Ibid.*, p 17a

territories is the background of Kautilya's *Arthasastra*. There were a number of republican tribes: the Vajjiyans including the Lichchhavis and the Videhans, the Sakyas, the Moriyas, etc., on the Northern and Western borders of the major monarchies. Only scraps of information are available regarding their administration. The head of the republic was an elected chief called Raja corresponding to the Greek *archon* or president. The assembly of the citizens freely discussed matters, administrative and judicial, and the discussions were conducted in a regular manner, the decisions being duly recorded. It is not clear whether there was voting. In cases of lack of unanimity, the question at issue was referred to a commiteee of arbitration. Some authors compare the Indian assemblies to modern Parliaments. Local affairs were managed more or less on the same lines. The Buddha, a firm believer in republican institutions, assured the Lichchhavis that they would not come to grief if their faith in free institutions continued undiminished.

Bimbisara: c. 525—c. 500 B.C. Sisunaga created a chieftaincy at Girivraja (Old Rajagriha) near Gaya, and Bana refers to the tragic death of Kakavarna, but we know next to nothing about the predecessors of Bimbisara, who laid well and truly the foundations of Magadhan political ascendancy. His success was partly due to the initiative taken by the Saisunagas before him in the conquest of Anga. He secured allies on his Northern and Western frontiers; his marriage with a Lichchhavi princess was followed by another marriage with a Kosala princess, whose dowry was the Kasi region. With his strength thus augmented, he defeated Brahmadatta of Anga, annexed the kingdom, and appointed his son, Ajatasatru, to govern it from Champa. He was on amicable terms with Malwa and Gandhara. Thus by diplomacy and war he started Magadha on its imperial career. He was a capable administrator who exercised effective control over his *mahamatras* or principal officers.

A new Rajagriha (Rajgir, near the town of Bihar) was built by him, though Fa-hien mentions Ajatasatru as its founder. He is regarded as a Jain and a benefactor of Jainism, in spite of his admiration for the Buddha. During his reign probably the Indus Valley was conquered by Darius I, the able and ambitious Achaemenian emperor.

Ajatasatru: c. 500—c. 475 B.C. It is not certain whether Ajatasatru's mother was the Lichchhavi or Kosala princess married by his father. The Buddhist story of his sending his father to the other world at the instance of Devadatta is rejected by Dr. Smith as an instance of the perversion of history by theological rancour. Though there is nothing inherently improbable in the allegation, particularly when Devadatta, the enemy of the Buddha, is incriminated, a doubt creeps in caused by the explanation of the name of Ajatasatru as "one who was, even before his birth, his father's enemy"—a piece of perverted etymology. Further, the four successors of Ajatasatru down to Nagadasaka are also regarded as parricides, and all the five are treated by the Buddhists as members of a patricidal dynasty, which was overthrown by the conscience-stricken people, who chose the minister Sisunaga to rule over them, eighty years after the first parricide. Ajatasatru seems to have patronised the two leading prophets of his age. His aggressive policy of territorial expansion appears to have provoked a great combination against him of Kosala and Vaisali, which he required about sixteen years to subdue. The fall of the great republic is said to have been caused by the Kautilyan method of creating divisions among the people. The annexation of the leading kindom of Kosala and of the confederate republic added immensely to the strength and prestige of Ajatasatru. During his wars he had fortified Pataligrama *(later Pataliputra), whose strategical importance* was appreciated by that daring imperialist. It would be a great gain to knowledge if Dr K. P. Jayaswal's

surmise were well founded that the Parkham (near Mathura) statue is that of Ajatasatru, who may be regarded as the precursor of the great imperialist, Chandragupta Maurya. During this reign happened the massacre of the Sakyas, and the first Buddhist Council was held at Rajagriha soon after the Buddha's decease about 487 B.C.

Darsaka: *c.* 475—*c.* 450 and **Udayin:** *c.* 450—*c.* 425. Darsaka was the son and successor of Ajatasatru, but the *Mahavamsa* puts Udayin in his place. His historicity is proved by Bhasa's *Svapnavasavadatta*, which establishes his contemporaneity with Udayana of Vatsa and Mahasena of Avanti. If he were identical with Nagadasaka, he would be the last of the parricidal line, superseded after a reign of twenty-four years by the elected minister-king Sisunaga, according to the Buddhist story. Mahavira died probably during this reign. Udayin, the next ruler, is well remembered for his foundation of the city of Pataliputra (Pushpapura or Kusumapura) at the junction of the Ganges and the Son. Avanti, by its annexation of the Vatsa kingdom of Kausambi, became a danger to Magadha, but the final conflict between the two powers was postponed. Dr. K. P. Jayaswal's identification of one of the "Patna statues" with that of Udayin is unproven.

The Nanda Empire: Nandivardhana *c.* 425—*c.* 400. The period from Nandivardhana, the successor of Udayin, to the advent of the Mauryas is covered by two generations of Saisunagas and two generations of Nandas, according to the *Puranas*, which indicate no dynastic gap between them but only a religious and social hiatus. Therefore they should be treated as a single dynasty. The last two Saisunagas should be bracketed with the Nandas *prima facie* on the similarity of their names. Dr. K. P. Jayaswal's interpretation of *Navananda* as Neo-Nandas or Later Nandas, as distinct from *Purvananda* or Early Nandas, is not tenable as the *Puranas* and the *Mahavamsa* distinctly speak of nine Nandas. The Hathigumpha

Inscription is now read, not as postulating a Nanda three hundred years before Kharavela but as referring to a Nanda era To regard Nandivardhana as a Nanda, we must seek elsewhere Alberuni mentions besides the well known Harsha era of the seventh century A D, a Harsha era four hundred years before Vikrama (58 57 B C) that is in the fifth century B C As the words *nanda* and *harsha* are identical in meaning an allusion to the era of Nandavardhana or Nandivardhana is clear Moreover, an inscription of Vikramaditya VI Chalukya (A.D 1076 1127) refers apparently to a Nanda era As there is some difficulty in taking Nandivardhana to 458 7 B C, according to our conjectural chronology, the period of four hundred years may be interpreted less strictly It is not possible to place him in the fourth century B C He may be assigned to the last quarter of the fifth century or to an earlier period seeing that the *Puranas* give him a reign period of forty years So it is practically certain that Nandivardhana is to be reckoned as a Nanda, though the orthodox Pauranikas separated him and his successor, Mahanandin from the "unholy" Nandas Mahapadma and his sons Therefore Nandivardhana may be regarded as the inaugurator of the Nanda era Further he is credited with the extinction of the Pradyota dynasty of Malwa Whether he conquered Kalinga is more than we can say in the light of the revised reading of the Khara vela epigraph That he was an emperor is further supported by his statue with the inscription "Vartanandi of universal dominion," even Vardhana may be regarded as an imperial title

Mahapadma Nanda *c* 375—*c* 350 That the Nandas were an imperial power is indicated by the city, Nau Nanda Dehra on the Godavari Mysore inscriptions of the twelfth century A D allude to them as rulers of Kuntala (Western Dakhan and Northern Mysore) The *Artha sastra* of Kautilya mentions "the scriptures and the science of weapons and the earth which had passed to the

Nanda king." The *Mudrarakshasa* of Visakhadatta ascribes an imperial position to the Nandas. The Greek and Latin authors describe the Prasioi or East Indians as one great people. On the eve of Alexander's invasion of the Panjab, Magadha was the paramount power in the Gangetic Valley. The conquest of Kalinga by the Nandas and the removal of a Jain image from there to Northern India are clear from the Hathigumpha inscription of Kharavela, thus showing that the Nanda conqueror of Kalinga was a Jain. Above all the *Puranas* describe Mahapadma as *sarvakshatrantaka* (destroyer of all Kshatriyas), *ekarat* (sole monarch) and *ekachchhatra* (one bringing all kings under one umbrella). We do not know who dislodged the Achaemenids from the Indus Valley; perhaps Mahapadma. So it appears that Nandivardhana was the first Nanda emperor whose activities prepared the way for the thorough-going imperialism of Mahapadma. But reliance on the *Mahavamsa* leads not only to the insertion of Sisunaga in the middle of the genealogical list, but also to the division of really one dynasty into three—the Bimbisara, Saisunaga and Nanda dynasties—and to the attribution of the conquest of Malwa and the extinction of the Pradyotas to Sisunaga. Mr. Raychaudhuri* solves the chronological problem by adding the reign-periods given in the *Mahavamsa* to 323 B.C.: Bimbisara, 545—493; Ajatasatru, 493—461; Udayin, 461—445; Anuruddha and Munda, 445—437; Nagadasaka, 437—413; Sisunaga, 413—395; Kalasoka, 395—367; his ten sons, 367—345; and the nine Nandas, 345—323 B.C. He, however, recognises the imperial position of Mahapadma in accordance with the Puranic statement.

Decline and Fall of the Nandas. It seems that the conquest of Kalinga was temporary and that the successors of Mahapadma lost it as it was no part of Chandragupta Maurya's empire, and as Asoka had to conquer it afresh.

* Raychaudhuri, *op. cit.*, pp. 184-86.

The fiscal system became oppressive, and weights and measures were overhauled. The fabulous wealth of the Nandas—the last of the line was named Dhana Nanda—is alluded to by Greek writers and Mamulanar, the Tamil poet of the Sangam age. Their unpopularity is equally clear and might have been further due to their being *Sudrabijis* (descended from a Sudra) patronising the heterodox Jainism. But an *anuloma* marriage (marriage of a high caste male with a low caste woman) could never be regarded as scandalous from the point of view of the age. According to the Greek story, the last Nanda was the son of a barber. The *Arya-Manjusri-Mulakalpa*, a late Buddhist work in the style of the *Puranas*, calls Mahapadma *Nichamukhya* (chief among base men) and regards him as the Prime Minister of his predecessor Whatever may be the cause of their unpopularity, the military strength of the Nandas is beyond doubt, and Alexander's soldiers were influenced by reports of the huge and efficient Magadha army, consisting of not less than 20,000 horse, 200,000 foot, 2,000 chariots and three to six thousand elephants. The Nanda empire was seized by Chandragupta Maurya after the violent overthrow of the dynasty about 325 B C.

Causes of Imperial Triumph. The advance of political integration in the heart of Northern India during the two centuries preceding the Mauryan revolution is coeval with the expansion and decline of the Achaemenian empire. The success of the Indian movement was due to the existence of a number of enterprising and ambitious monarchs like Bimbisara, Ajatasatru, Nandivardhana and Mahapadma Nanda, who did not scruple to employ Kautilyan devices to achieve success Geographical factors like extensive and rich riverine regions facilitated their task, but these factors had always been there. The stimulus of foreign rule in North-Western India might not have been a negligible factor. The eminence of the Mauryas in many fields should be viewed in the light of the achieve-

ments of the Saisunaga-Nanda period of Indian History. Along with political integration progressed political differentiation, the advance of which is reflected in the *Arthasastra* of Kautilya.

SECTION VIII. IRANIAN PENETRATION

Cyrus the Great and Darius I. That there was a period of Indo-Iranian unity, followed by an age of commercial intercourse between the separated Iranian and Indo-Aryan peoples, is generally recognised. With the foundation of the Achaemenian empire closer relations developed between Iran and India. Cyrus the great (558—530 B.C.) conquered Gandhara. Cambyses (530—522 B.C.) was too busy with Egypt to think of Indian conquest. Darius I (522—486 B.C.), the great conqueror and organiser, annexed the Panjab and Sindh to his far-flung empire, and constituted the 20th Satrapy of India—the total number of provinces being between twenty and twenty-eight. His Behistun inscription (519 B.C.) does not mention the Panjab and Sindh, whereas his Hamadan record, indited before 515 B.C., refers to the Indian province. As Darius was in Egypt in 518 and 517, Prof. Herzfeld thinks that the Indus Valley must have been conquered in 516 B.C. The Indian Satrapy consisted of Sindh, a part of the North-West Frontier Province, and a large portion of the Panjab. It was the most fertile and populous fragment of the Achaemenian empire, paying a tribute of about a million sterling, one-third of the revenues of the Asiatic provinces. The naval expedition of Skylax down the Indus was undertaken probably subsequent to the Indian conquest. The death of Darius before he could avenge the defeat of his army at Marathon in 490 B.C. by Athens removed a great danger to Greece and India. "He ranks very high among the greatest Aryans of history."*

* Sir P. Sykes, *A History of Persia* (1930), I, p. 191.

Xerxes and Artaxerxes II Xerxes (486—465 B C) secured the co-operation of his Indian province in his invasion of Greece Herodotus gives some account of the Indian infantry and cavalry, which participated in the battle of Plataea (479 B C) and retreated from Greece after the disastrous and decisive Achaemenian defeat in that battle The success of Athens and Sparta in crowning Xerxes with disgrace marks the decline of the great empire founded by Cyrus and extended and organised with wonderful efficiency by Darius I After the failure of the Achaemenids against Greece they could follow no forward policy in India The fortunes of the Indian province after the death of Xerxes are obscure That Achaemenian authority in the Indus Valley remained intact till the end of the last Achaemenid, Darius III, in 330 B C is not probable The political conditions which confronted Alexander the Great in North Western India would suggest the overthrow of Iranian domination some appreciable time before his advent Moreover, he did not encounter Iranian officials east of the Hindu Kush Dr W W Tarn says that "the Indian provinces were finally lost in the reign of Artaxerxes II" * (405—358 B C)

Effects of the Conquest It would be surprising if the political contact lasting for more than 100 years did not affect India Besides giving an impetus to Indo-Iranian commerce and preparing the way for Alexander's invasion, the Achaemenian domination was responsible for the prevalence of the Kharoshthi script in North Western India till the third century A D Though foreign influence on the punch marked coins of India is doubtful it was undeniably exerted on Mauryan sculpture In other ways as well the Iranian connection with India proved more fruitful than the short lived Indo-Macedonian contact

* W W Tarn *The Greeks in Bactria and India* (1938) p 130

SECTION IX. THE GREAT EMATHIAN CONQUEROR

Antecedents of the Macedonian Conqueror. Alexander the Great, son and successor of Philip II of Macedonia, was born in 356 B.C. and trained from the age of thirteen to that of sixteen by Aristotle, "the master of those that know." He loved the sword and the *Iliad* of Homer best, and developed a love for war and learning. He became king of Macedonia (of which the plain of Emathia was a part, and hence the phrase, "the great Emathian conqueror" of Milton) at twenty, consequent on the assassination of his father at the instigation of his fierce mother Olympias. Though he obtained the best military and literary education of the age, he was brought up at a court notoriously loose in morals, and had inherited a terrible temper from his mother. Still he exhibited a lofty morality (his latest biographer emphasises this trait in his character), was chivalrous to women, hated meanness, and scorned to steal a victory. He was remarkable for personal courage, and his love of Greek culture was inordinate. At his accession to the throne, he became heir to the fruits of his father's manifold and fertile activity for over twenty years; he inherited a strong and unified kingdom with its hegemony over Greece well established and a thoroughly organised and up-to-date army. His father had not realised his aim of Asiatic conquest, which Alexander took up after quelling a Greek rebellion. His Asiatic adventure was facilitated by his own equipment and generalship and by the debilitated condition of the Achaemenian empire, aggravated by the incompetence of Darius III. The battle of Arbela, one of the decisive battles in the world's history, made him master of that empire in 331 B.C., and Darius fled and died in the following year. Alexander's conquest of Ecbatana in 330 brought his original plan of campaign to a successful termination. Now he aimed at further conquest eastwards and thought of recovering the lost Achaemenian Satrapy of India. His

character changed for the worse, and his cruelty and vanity increased. He had already set fire to the palace of Xerxes at the suggestion of Thais, his famous Athenian concubine; he now executed his veteran general, massacred a Greek colony in Bactria, and killed his own foster-brother who had been the saviour of his life. Though he did some unjustifiable things justifying the phras. "Macedonia's madman", he felt remorse for all his lapses from the right path. It was perhaps at this stage of his life that he dreamed the noble dream of uniting the Asiatics and the Macedonians into one people by means of common military service, intermarriage and Greek culture. He founded many Alexandrias to promote trade, culture and cosmopolitan intercourse. In spite of opposition from his compatriots he worked sincerely for the realisation of his ideal of the unity of mankind. Though he failed to achieve his noble ambition, his magnificent vision of a united humanity made him truly great. "The greatest thing about him is that he was the pioneer of one of the supreme revolutions in the world's outlook, the first man known to us who contemplated the brotherhood of man..... He was a philosopher"* (W. W. Tarn).

Causes of the Invasion of India. We have mentioned that Alexander's invasion of India was an after-thought. Neither his father nor he when leaving Pella, his capital, thought of penetrating into India The idea of regaining the lost satrapy as heir to Darius III might be harmonised with that of a pan-Hellenic crusade against Iran and India for their part in the invasion of Greece under Xerxes. Herodotus and other authors had familiarised the West with a fabulously wealthy and mysterious India, containing men and things out of the range of ordinary human experience. Alexander's spirit of geographical enquiry and his passion for natural history, imbibed from his

* *Proceedings of the British Academy* (1939), p. 148.

tutor, influenced his decision to invade India, and he believed that, on the eastern side of India, there was the continuation of the Caspian Sea, the eastern boundary of the world, according to the geographical conceptions of his age.

Condition of North-Western India. In North-Western India there were princes and princelings and republican clans with a fierce love of autonomy. The leading kings were Ambhi of Taxila, the ruler of Abhisara who thought of playing a double game against Alexander, and Poros, the tallest of them all (literally and figuratively), the hero of the Indo-Macedonian struggle, next to Alexander. Nysa, between the Kabul river and the Indus, was a republic with a President and a Senate of 300 members. The Kathaioi, between the Jhelum and the Chinab, were famous for warlike qualities. The Siboi, below the confluence of the Jhelum and the Chinab, were clad in skins and used clubs. The Oxydrakoi or the Kshudraka, between the Ravi and the Bias, were a numerous and warlike people. The Malloi or Malavas were soldiers by profession. The Abastanoi or Ambashtha possessed a strong army and a democratic government. The kingdom of Mousikanos in Sindh worked institutions similar to those of Sparta and Crete. Brahman influence there kindled the revolt against Alexander. Patalene, like Sparta, was ruled by two hereditary kings, but the Senate was all in all. Though North-Western India was the most disunited part of India and though the princes and tribes were at war with one another and could never hang together for common purposes, it was not easy to overcome so many sources of opposition. It was not a question of a single pitched battle followed by the acquisition of an extensive empire by the victor.

Alexander's Movements in the Indus Valley. Alexander's march from the Hindu Kush began in May, 327 B.C., and the reduction of the wild tribes was so

thorough that his home communications were well secured. After ten months devoted to the hill campaigns, he crossed the Indus in February 326 and proceeded to Taxila where he was given a public reception. From there he marched to the bank of the Jhelum and saw the army of Poros on the other side of the river, which he crossed stealthily and flung a surprise on his enemy. The famous battle of the Jhelum or Hydaspes was fought in the Karri plain, and though Alexander triumphed in crushing the army of Poros, his success was by no means easy. It was his supreme qualities as a general that stood him in good stead on this occasion, coupled with the fright of the elephants of Poros and the inefficiency of the latter's bowmen due to the ground having been made slippery by rain. The Indian hero fought to the last and failed, and when questioned by Alexander, boldly demanded a treatment befitting his own royal rank. The theory of Alexander's defeat by Poros is untenable.* After the battle (July, 326 B.C.) Alexander continued his advance to the Bias, overcoming opposition on the way. But his further progress was prevented by what was practically an army mutiny. His eloquence did not produce the usual effect, and his personal magnetism vanished for the moment. In reply to his appeal to the soldiers he was reminded of the virtue of moderation in success. He yielded, and the retreat commenced after the erection of twelve stone altars. His voyage down the Hydaspes and the Indus took ten months, during which period he encountered the most terrible opposition, and on one occasion was severely wounded, but ultimately he conquered all difficulties. He left India in October, 325 B.C., took seven months to reach Susa (Persia) in May, 324, and died at Babylon in June, 323 B.C. Thus his Indian expedition on the whole lasted for three years, though his actual stay in this country was only for 19 months, including the river voyage of 10 months.

* R. S. Tripathi, *History of Ancient India* (1942), pp. 125–26 n.

Organisation of the Conquest. The dominions of *Poros were enlarged so as* to include the territory between the Jhelum and the Bias. His old enemy of Taxila was reconciled to him at the instance of Alexander. The Abhisara king became a Satrap. The rest of the Panjab, including the kingdom of Ambhi, was formed into a Macedonian Satrapy under *Philippos. Another satrapy,* consisting of Sindh and other territories, was placed in charge of Peithon. Foreign rule in the Indus Valley was strengthened by garrisons of Macedonian and Greek mercenaries, distributed among the cities founded by Alexander with a view to the advancement of material and cultural progress. But these arrangements obtained no *sufficient time to justify themselves, as Macedonian* authority was wiped away in a few years by Chandragupta Maurya.

Effects of the Invasion. *The effects of* Alexander's invasion of India were disproportionate to the magnitude of his achievement and to his greatness and aims. He intended to attach North-Western India to his empire politically and culturally. But his great effort was rendered nugatory quite at the beginning by his untimely death. It was his misfortune rather than his fault that his conquest of India *proved less stable than that of* Darius I. The extinction of his authority in the Indus Valley, a few years after its establishment, nipped his great cultural experiment in the bud. The work of healing and settlement could not be done during his 19 months' sojourn in India. The conqueror had no time to teach, and the conquered were in no mood to learn. The fate of his venture depended on the longevity of Macedonian authority in India. In the circumstances, any lasting effects of the invasion on this country would be out of the question. As a matter of fact, there is no trace of Greek *influence on Indian institutions* as described by Kautilya or Megasthenes. Even the military lessons of Alexander's success were not learnt, and the Mauryan army was

organised on indigenous lines. It is argued that Alexander's invasion indirectly influenced India in so far as his Hellenisation of Western Asia was permanent, and that any subsequent influence on India from that quarter might be regarded as ultimately due to Alexander. True, but not to his invasion of India; even if he had not conquered North-Western India such later influences were inevitable. An immediate effect of the invasion was the stimulus it gave to the political unification of North-Western India under the Mauryas. It not only showed the untenability of a system of small states with their eternal quarrels on or near the North-West Frontier, but also, owing to the territorial re-adjustments made by the conqueror, contributed to the greater union of the Panjab and Sindh. The total number of political units was reduced. Poros found his kingdom extended, and the kinglets and petty chiefs became dependent or mostly disappeared. Therefore Alexander unconsciously lightened the labours of Chandragupta Maurya in North-Western India. The new land routes opened by the Macedonian conqueror and his naval explorations increased the existing facilities for trade between India and Western Asia

Alexander's Place in Indian History. Alexander's Indian expedition is alluded to by no indigenous author. The only existing evidence of it on our side is the claim of a few chiefs of North-Western India to be descended from Alexander. Still it is unfair to interpret this silence of our sources as indicative of his negligible role in Indian History. The tendency of some scholars is to look sneeringly at the Indian career of Alexander as if a giant turned pigmy at the magic touch of India, and to regard him as a semi barbarian bent on cutting throats irrespective of caste distinctions and in defiance of "benefit of clergy" No doubt Alexander encountered difficulties in India which he had not experienced before. He stole a victory contrary to his boasted principle. He did not

come into conflict with the most powerful army in India—the Magadhan army. Therefore it is groundless to say that he proved the intrinsic inferiority of the greatest Indian armies, though it is idle to speculate that the Nanda army would have been more than a match for his army if there had been a collision between the two. He did not permanently affect Indian life or thought, and his expedition, contrary to his expectations, ultimately turned out to be a barren and ephemeral triumph. But his generalship and heroism did not suffer eclipse on Indian soil, and he returned not crest-fallen but as an undefeated general, having exhibited not only his barbarity, but also his generosity, goodness and greatness. He had even interested himself in Indian gymnosophists or anchorites and philosophers. It is therefore singularly unhappy to compare him with Timur, Nadir Shah and other scourges of mankind.

SECTION X. RELIGION

The First Buddhist Council. The historicity of the First Council is sufficiently vouched for by unanimous Buddhist tradition. It is not all improbable that the Buddha's disciples met at Rajagriha immediately after his decease (c 487 B.C.), and collected his teaching in order to guide themselves, and such guidance would be necessary because the Master had said that there was no need for a successor to him. Moreover, a monk named Subhadda said: "Enough Sirs, weep not, neither lament. We are well rid of the great Samana" (Gautama). This irreverence led, on Mahakassapa's initiative, to the summoning of a council, in the proceedings of which he, Ananda and Upali participated conspicuously. Trivial charges were brought against Ananda, who answered them with great modesty. Though we cannot be certain regarding the portions of the *Tripitaka* recited at the council, we may reckon them as the nucleus of the Canon which obtained final shape later.

The Second Council The Second Council was held at Vaisali about 100 years after the Buddha's decease, i e, in c 387 B C, in order to decide some questions of discipline Many monks attended the meeting, and eight of them actively participated in its deliberations, particularly Revata, Sabbakami and Yasa The "ten points" of the monks of Vaisali were rejected, consequently happened perhaps the schism of the Mahasanghikas The historicity of the second council is accepted by many scholars *

The Eighteen Schools The first three centuries of Buddhism witnessed its division into eighteen schools or sects, which may be grouped into four the Theravadins, the Sarvastivadins, the Mahasanghikas and the Sammitiyas Their origin, doctrines and history are not sufficiently clear The Theravadins were the followers of the Buddha's teaching The Sarvastivadins were realists who maintained that everything exists Both schools regarded the Buddha as a human being, but magnified his qualities and powers so as to make them supra mundane But the Mahasanghikas conceived him as a divine being The Sammitiyas held the doctrine of *pudgala* i e, that the individual has practically an effective self, a personality (but not exactly a permanent soul), and approached to Brahmanism on the question of *atman* The Sarvastivadins, and the Mahasanghikas prepared the way for the Mahayana

Fortunes of Buddhism During the two centuries following the Buddha's *parinibbana*, the history of his religion is more internal than external With the growth of the Sangha developed the institutions of confession and retreat The latter confined monks and nuns to a locality for three months in the rainy season and limited the period of their wandering life In spite of the lack

* R C Majumdar, *Buddhist Councils* (B C Law, *Buddhistic Studies*, 1931, Chapter II)

of royal patronage and differences within the Church, the growth of religious literature and ecclesiastical activity consolidated the position of Buddhism. As regards its external growth, its fortunes would not have been bright during the 80 years of "parricide-kings." The Nandas seem to have had leanings towards Jainism. M. Przyluski interprets the councils as marking the shifting centre of gravity of Buddhism, and the Second Council, as symptomatic of its migration in the direction of Mathura. Before Asoka Buddhism prevailed in Northern India from Anga to Avanti; some further extension in Northern Bengal and Kashmir is indicated. Therefore it is not quite correct to say that the condition of Buddhism remained stationary between the decease of the Buddha and the coronation of Asoka.

Jainism, Vaishnavism and Saivism. Jainism advanced slowly but steadily in spite of the activities of the Ajivikas or followers of Gosala, the opponent of Mahavira. Ajatasatru and Udayin were its warm supporters. From the greater hostility of the Buddhists than that of the Jains towards the Nandas and from the Hathigumpha inscription, it is clear that Jainism got the better of Buddhism as regards royal patronage. The grand religious inquest of the Buddha and Mahavira created a stir in the dovecotes of orthodoxy and promoted other religious movements. Their appeal to the *ahimsa* instinct of man was wider than the circle of their followers. The opposition of their personalities to the "impersonal" Rishis of the Brahmanical system had contributed to their success. The *bhakti* (devotion to a personal god) movement, founded on *ahimsa* and adoration of a personal deity, set its face against animal sacrifices and ritualism. Vaishnavism and Saivism originated during this period. Krishna-worship developed at Mathura and its neighbourhood. Panini refers to Vasudevakas or worshippers of Vasudeva or Vishnu. The transformation of the terrific Rudra into the benevolent Siva was completed. Thus a new theism

based on old ideas confronted the heterodox novelty of Buddhism and Jainism. Further the old religion was consolidated, and the *Sutras—Srauta, Grihya* and *Dharma* —based on the Vedic lore were composed. The earlier Sutrakaras (authors of the *Sutras*) like Gautama (different from the Buddha), Bo(au)dhayana and Apastamba belong to this age. On the whole the tendency of their works is illiberal and puritanical, contrasting sharply with the practices of the Vedic epoch; their keynote is restraint rather than freedom. Here we have the beginnings of the rigid Brahmanical religious and social system.

SECTION XI. ECONOMIC CONDITION

A Progressive Economic Structure. Mrs. Rhys Davids reconstructs the economic picture of the age mainly with reference to the Buddhist *Jatakas* in order to disprove the facile assumption of Western economists that the ancient Orient, more ethical than economic, emphasised agriculture at the expense of industry and commerce, and sacrificed economic progress at the altar of caste, and that China alone was familiar with the instruments of credit from the seventh century A.D. The allusions to economic conditions in the *Jatakas* are incidental and valuable, whatever may be character of the stories. The foundation of the economic structure was the village of small peasant-proprietors who owned the soil, subject to the payment of taxes levied by the government in kingdoms as well as republics. There were only a few cities like Rajagriha, Benares, Sravasti, Saketa, Kausambi and Champa, but the distinction between *gama* (village) and *nigama* (small town) was not sharp as a village might be inhabited by thirty to a thousand families.

Agriculture. Agriculture was the normal occupation which was regarded as natural and healthy, though its pursuit neither increased nor diminished a man's social standing. But to abandon cultivation in order to take

up service under impoverished princes was reprobated. There was a well-developed sense of citizenship among the villagers, who exhibited strong tendencies towards corporate activity under the leadership of their headman. The labourers working for wages were regarded as inferior to slaves. A number of grains were grown, including rice, and also sugarcane, vegetables, fruits and flowers. Drought or floods caused famine, which was sometimes widespread. The Brahmans and the Kshatriyas were frequently engaged in agriculture, though this calling was reserved for the Vaisyas, and in all sorts of occupations including even snake-charming.

Industry. The principle of specialisation and of division of labour was well understood, and corporate activity was much conspicuous. There was localisation of industry, and industrial life was controlled by *srenis* or guilds, of which there were as many as eighteen: wood-workers, smiths, leather-dressers, painters, etc. Each guild was presided over by a chief, and such industrial magnates were in close touch with the government, exercising much influence on it. Quarrels among the guilds as at Benares might result in the establishment of a common control over them. The other important industries were ivory-working, weaving, jewellery, pottery and garland-making. Even robbers understood the value of organisation and corporate activity. The Setthi was a merchant prince. Ananthapindika, the lay patron and friend of the Buddha, was a great Setthi. Though it was customary for the son to adopt his father's profession, there was sufficient freedom of initiative and mobility of labour.

Commerce and Currency. Temporary and permanent partnerships were common, and distant sea-borne trade was active. Internal trade was equally flourishing, and many trade routes were in good and safe condition. The importance of retail trade was understood, and the qualities of a successful shop-keeper known. Though barter

survived to some extent, coins were the ordinary means of exchange Credit instruments were also in use, and prices were competitive and customary Money-lending was regarded as an honest profession In short we find "agriculture diligently and amicably carried on by practically the whole people as a toilsome but most natural and necessary pursuit; crafts and commerce flourishing, highly organised corporately and locally, under conditions of individual and corporate competition, the leading men thereof the friends and counsellers of kings, labour largely hereditary, yet therewithal a mobility and initiative anything but rigid revealed in the exercise of it, (and) a thorough familiarity with money and credit"*

SECTION XII SOCIAL LIFE

Caste The threat to Brahmanism offered by Buddhism and Jainism must have been responsible for the growing rigidity of caste The early *Sutras* stereotype the four castes with their distinctions sharply outlined and with appropriate professions, emphasising the superiority of Brahmans The Vaisyas tended to be similar to the Sudras who were free from the restrictions prescribed for the higher castes Though the food prepared by the latter was not regarded as impure, disabilities of various kinds attached to their lives made their social status irksome and humiliating The growth of Aryan contact with older Indian tribes had contributed to the formation practically of a fifth caste of Chandalas and other untouchables, whose position was now defined Many dishes and liquor were denied to the Brahmans, but not animal food, still the tendency towards vegetarianism was pronounced among them Further, the four *asramas* (stages of life) and the duties proper to them engaged much attention In short the *Sutras* bound particularly the Brahmans with ceremonies of all kinds from birth to death.

* *C H I*, I p 219

suit beginners in grammatical study Panini mentions ten *purvacharyas* (predecessors), but his work has eclipsed their fame Though he has been corrected and supplemented by Katyayana, a South Indian and Patanjali his glory remains undiminished The chief characteristic of his work is its astonishing brevity and its attempt to derive all substantives from verbs "Grammar is by the Indians regarded as the first and most important of the sciences because it is the foundation of all of them The greatest achievement of Indian science it has rendered eminent services to Western philology The Sanskrit grammarians were the first to analyse word forms, to recognise the difference between root and suffix to determine the functions of suffixes, and on the whole to elaborate a grammatical system so accurate and complete as to be unparalleled in any other country"* Katyayana, the next great grammarian lived about 350 B C Some of the innumerable predecessors of Kautilya and Vatsyayana must have lived in this period Dirgha Charayana, alluded to by both is probably identical with the minister of Prasenajit of Kosala

Philosophy The earliest of the six systems of Indian philosophy, Sankhya and Yoga were pre-Buddhistic Though the two *darsanas* originated in different circumstances, unconnected and connected with religion—one connected with the explanation of the world and the other with asceticism—and though the two were atheistic and theistic respectively they became philosophically one It is even said that God is not an essential part of the Yoga system The Sankhya turns away from the *Vedas* and traces the origin of the world to *prakriti* or original matter, but recognises a number of independent souls These two modes of thought profoundly influenced Buddhism and Jainism The opposition to the Vedic lore exhibited by the latter was led by the materialists,

* Macdonell *op cit* p 136

whose Acharya, Charvaka, probably lived early in this period. The *Vinayapitaka* prohibits the study of *Lokayata* (rationalism). It is said that Brihaspati, preceptor of the gods, wrote a *Sutra* to confound the materialists and atheists. The Charvakas preached thorough-going rationalism and regarded the soul as mere intelligence. They stigmatised the Vedic Rishis as humbugs and the Vedic ritual as their means of livelihood. They asked the performers of sacrifice to sacrifice their fathers so that they might obtain salvation, rather than innocent animals. Their true position is difficult to make out, and it is hard to believe that they wrote much to prove the value of sensual pleasure. Their writings have been mostly destroyed by orthodoxy and perverted to suit its own purpose. Kautilya gives the name *anvikshaki* or philosophy to Sankhya, Yoga and *Lokayata*, and allows it the place of honour in his enumeration of the sciences, the *Vedas* occupying the second place.

Education. Takshasila or Taxila earned a great name as the centre of advanced studies, religious and secular, especially medicine. Jivaka lived in the time of Bimbisara, and at the completion of his seven-year course in medicine, he was asked, according to the story, to pick out the non-medicinal plants around Taxila, and his examiner accepted the answer that there were none. Panini and Kautilya probably flourished in that academic atmosphere. The University of Taxila shines in the pages of the *Jatakas*, which in one place mention five hundred pupils studying *silpa* (art). The number of subjects taught there must have increased since the period of the *Chandogya Upanishad*.*

Art. The only available specimens of the art of the period are the unique remains at Old Rajagriha, the

* S. V. Venkateswara, *Indian Culture Through the Ages* (1928), I. pp. 161 62; R. N. Mehta, *Pre-Buddhist India* (1939), pp. 299-305.

capital of Magadha till Bimbisara abandoned it, and the statues already mentioned, whose identification and ascription to this period are not beyond doubt The punch marked coins, which are of indigenous origin, are primitive in type

SECTION XIV SOUTH INDIA

Peeps into South Indian History The Aryanisation of South India must have been completed during this period The relations of the Nandas with Kalinga and the possible extension of their power to the Godavari, even to Mysore, are the only available peeps into South Indian History The trade between Northern and Southern India must be viewed in the light of the supreme importance attached to it in the *Artha-sastra* of Kautilya The sea borne trade of South India with Western Asia and Egypt, proved by the *Baveru* (Babylon) *Jataka*, must have continued. The Andhras became an independent power, and the Tamil kingdoms must have been long in existence Though Panini does not mention South India, Katyayana shows his familiarity with the terms Chola and Pandya

CHAPTER IV

THE MAURYA EMPIRE

(*c.* 325—*c.* 188 B.C.)

SECTION I. CHANDRAGUPTA (*c* 325—*c* 301 B.C.): SOURCES OF HISTORY

Sources. The Brahmanical and Buddhist traditions embodied in the *Puranas* and *Mahavamsa* supply scraps of information regarding the overthrow of the Nandas by Chandragupta and Kautilya and the reign-period of the first Maurya—twenty-four years. The Jain tradition is chiefly valuable for its account of Chandragupta's abdication and conversion to Jainism. Most of the Greek authors help us here and there. But the *Arthasastra* of Kautilya and the *Indika* of Megasthenes are the historian's mainstay, though the *Mudrarakshasa* of Visakhadatta deserves greater attention than has been bestowed upon it. Our information, despite its richness and variety, bears more upon the system of administration and social life than upon political history and chronology.

The Arthasastra of Kautilya. The term *Arthasastra* is defined by Kautilya as "that science which treats of the means of acquiring and maintaining the earth;" it is therefore distinct from the other sciences dealing with *dharma, kama* and *moksha*. It is also called *Dandaniti*, the science of sceptre or government (the word *danda* has other meanings like army and punishment, which are not however appropriate here), and distinguished from *Varta* or Economics. The treatise of Kautilya is based on many previous works on the subject, and frequently the opinions of *purvacharyas* are quoted and discussed and accepted or rejected; it is in the form of a *Sutra* and *Bhashya* (text and commentary), both done by the author, who is also called Vishnugupta in the work itself. He has other

names like Vatsyayana, Dramidacharya and Chanalya recorded in later lexicons like the *Trikandasesha* (a supplement to the *Amaralosa* of Amarasimha) and so a few scholars regard him as indentical with Vatsyayana, the author of the *Kama Sutra* and with another Vatsyayana who wrote the *Nyaya Bhashya*, and as a South Indian The form Kautilya is retained here as the alternative Kautalya is not sufficiently supported by manuscript authority

Contents The *Arthasastra* consists of fifteen books and a hundred and fifty chapters, but we may divide it into three parts, the first deals with the king his council and the departments of government, the second with civil and criminal law and the third with inter state law, diplomacy and war It is therefore a comprehensive work giving practical advice not only on governmental organisation but also on subjects like the best means of ruining the enemy though politics is treated in it as a normative science It is neither a Gazetteer nor a *darsana* (political philosophy), the word *darsana* is used in the work in the sense of the author's settled views or convictions It gives a blend of theory and practice which appeared soundest to the arch monarchist and imperial statesman in the evening of his life Its range is encyclopaedic and some doubt whether one man could have possessed so much knowledge and wisdom It is the one work in Sanskrit Literature which has removed the misconception before its discovery in 1905 that in ancient India everything was moved by other worldly considerations

Date The attempt to determine the age of Kautilya with reference to that of Vatsyayana the Kama sutrakara or of Yajnavalkya the Smritikara is as futile as the effort to determine an unknown with the help of another unknown There is no use in opposing mere possibilities to the definite and persistent tradition that the *Arthasastra* was composed not by a syndicate of

authors but by Kautilya, the minister of Chandragupta and exterminator of the Nandas, though one may not go to the extent of equating Kautilya's *narendra* with that emperor. Dandin's corroboration is exact regarding the total of 6,000 *slokas*. The remarkable unity pervading the work would argue its origin in a single brain. The objection that the author's name, Mr. Crooked, is not nice does not make it imaginary; there were worse names in ancient India like Sunaschepa (dog's tail), Pisuna (tale-bearer) and Kaunapadanta (demon's tooth). The argument from the non-mention of Kautilya by Megasthenes and Patanjali is more than balanced by references to him in Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jain Literatures. Moreover, neither the Greek ambassador nor the Sanskrit grammarian composed a Statesman's Year Book. The reality of Megasthenes is not affected by Kautilya's silence about him. That neither Pataliputra nor the extent of the Maurya Empire is referred to is not surprising as Kautilya was not a Gazetteer-maker. The *chakravartikshetra* (imperial territory) mentioned by him covers the whole of Northern India. That he was concerned only with petty states is refuted by the Prime Minister's salary of £2,400 per annum. There is therefore no valid ground for rejecting the historical role of the author mentioned in his work itself as the destroyer of the Nandas.* Seeing that Kautilya appears to have continued as Chief Minister under Bindusara and served during three reigns, the former may be assigned to the period 350—270 B.C.

The Indian Machiavelli. Some of the methods recommended by Kautilya for political success, such as bribery, deception and secret methods of ruining the enemy, are immoral or amoral. Hence he has been stigmatised as "the Indian Machiavelli." While admitting that, like Machiavelli, he has sinned less than sinned

* V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar, *The Mauryan Polity* (1932), Appendix I.

against and that the Machiavellian and Kautilyan traditions of statecraft have been perverted by moral Furies (*vide* Bana's indignation against Kautilya), like the Epicurean and Charvaka traditions, we cannot regard Kautilya as one who scrupulously conformed to the dictates of the *Dharmasastras*, or endorse the view that "even the sage Buddha would not but have given similar advice had he written an *Arthasastra*."

The Mudrarakshasa of Visakhadatta. Devoted exclusively to politics, the *Mudrarakshasa* is a drama in which there is no love element. In many respects it is in conformity with the *Arthasastra* of Kautilya. It shows that the Maurya revolution which dragged on for nearly a year was effected by Chandragupta and Kautilya with foreign help. It emphasises the insecurity of Chandragupta's life after the overthrow of the Nandas and the fidelity and machinations of the loyalists It reveals a political morality akin to that of the *Arthasastra*. The story of Malayaketu is reminiscent of the invasion of India by Seleukos Nikator and of his withdrawal. Chandragupta is described as a young man and a *Nandavamsiya* (belonging to the Nanda family), though belonging to a *gotrantara* (different *gotra*). He is addressed as *Vrishala* (Sudra) by Kautilya, and this allusion to the former's social status is confirmed by the *Puranas*. The reference to him as a *kulahina* (of ignoble birth) is made by Rakshasa (a character in the drama), who contrasts Chandragupta with his own masters, the Nandas, who are treated as *kulinas* (well born). Here we have a dramatic perversion of history. Similarly Rakshasa's characterisation of Chandragupta's government as ministerial rather than monarchical is merely to show the latter's weakness. A number of *adhyakshas* or Superintendents of Departments are mentioned except the Superintendent of Chariots; this exception gives a clue to the assignment of the drama to the period when chariots fell into disuse—certainly before the seventh century A.D. The *Bharata-*

vakya (the concluding benedictory stanza) would suggest the age of a Vaishnava emperor of eminence, for example, Chandragupta II Vikramaditya. Hence the work may be assigned to the fifth century A.D. Though the tradition embodied in the *Mudrarakshasa* is a late dramatic tradition, it seems to be founded on genuine contemporary accounts. The drama, the best historical play in Sanskrit Literature, throws light on the main outlines of the Maurya revolution and on the activities of Chandragupta and Kautilya. It describes the imperial position of the Nandas and the strength of the loyalist reaction after their extermination. In short the *Mudrarakshasa* deserves criticism rather than condemnation.*

The Indika of Megasthenes. The *Indika* of Megasthenes is extant only in fragments quoted by other authors.† His mention of impossibilities like one-legged men, men whose ears touched their feet, mouthless and noseless men, and mothers seven years old in the Pandya country, is responsible for Strabo's charge of mendacity against him, but all this shows merely his credulity and the character of his Indian informants. A few modern scholars have accused him of "an idealising tendency" and a proneness to attribute to India the institutions of other countries. This criticism is founded upon his general statement that there were no slaves; famines or liars in India and that theft was rare, and upon his seven exclusive divisions of Hindu society: philosophers, agriculturists, shepherds, artisans, soldiers; spies and ministers. Whatever might be his deficiencies as a critical observer and his linguistic imperfections for accurate reporting, his rank as ambassador and his sojourn at Pataliputra for a few years enabled him to record many valuable observations. There is no denying the accuracy of his

* R. Sathianathaier, *Historical Notes on the Mudrarakshasa* (*Journal of Oriental Research*, xii, pp. 147-58).

† F. J. Monahan, *The Early History of Bengal* (1925), Chapters XII–XV.

topographical account of the Mauryan metropolis and of his description of the administrative system, imperial and municipal. His picture of contemporary social life affords some corroborative evidence. He provokes laughter chiefly when he records without critical misgiving what he has not seen, or learnt from his trustworthy Indian contemporaries. He describes Pataliputra as the greatest city in India, at the junction of two rivers, a parallelogram 80 *stadia* by 15 ($9\frac{1}{2}$ miles by $1\frac{1}{4}$), protected by a wooden wall and a ditch. Armed women guarded the king and accompanied him in hunting, and his bedroom was changed frequently in order to defeat plots against his life. Pataliputra was governed by a commission of thirty members, divided into six committees of five members each. There were great officers of state to superintend irrigation channels, roads, rivers, land, tax-collection, etc. The army was well organised and properly equipped for war at the public expense, and governed by a body of thirty members, divided into six sections, in charge of the four branches of the army, the navy and the commissariat. The criminal law was very severe. The *Indika* and the *Arthasastra* supplement each other and constitute the leading authorities for the history of Chandragupta. The disharmony, to some extent, of the data of these works relates to circumstantials, not to fundamentals.*

SECTION II. THE MAURYA EMPIRE

The Magadhan Revolution. We have already indicated the parentage of Chandragupta, and the Brahmanical account of his origin need not be rejected† in order to support the Buddhist statement that he was a Kshatriya. As a young man he is said to have met Alexander in the Panjab, sought his help against the reigning Nanda who had somehow goaded him into intransigence, and fled

* Ramachandra Dikshitar, *op. cit.*, Appendix II.

† Contra—R. K. Mookerji, *Chandragupta Maurya and His Times* (1943), pp. 7–24.

from the Macedonian camp when he was threatened with death for his audacious behaviour. He proceeded to Pataliputra with the Brahman Kautilya of Taxila, overthrew the greedy, unpopular and heretical Nanda, and established his own power. The Maurya revolution was Brahmanical and popular, protracted and bloody. It was eminently successful in so far as a greater empire than that of the Nandas was erected. The next step taken by Chandragupta was the annihilation of the Macedonian garrisons and the emancipation of the Indus Valley from foreign yoke. The withdrawal of Eudemos, the successor of Philippos, about 317 B.C. marks the complete extinction of Macedonian authority in India. We are unaware of the exact date of Chandragupta's annexation of Gujarat and Kathiawar which is patent from the Girnar inscription of Rudradaman I, ascribing the origin of Lake Sudarsana to the Vaisya Pushyagupta, the provincial governor of Chandragupta; the Jain date of the Maurya Emperor's accession, 312 B.C., may be regarded as the date in question.

Seleukos Nikator. About 305 B.C. Seleukos Nikator aimed at re-establishing the Greek Satrapy of India and crossed the Indus, but found that Chandragupta had got ready. It is not certain that a battle was fought; undoubtedly Seleukos found his position untenable. We know only the terms of the treaty subsequently concluded which were entirely favourable to the Indian Emperor, who parted with 500 elephants and obtained in return the four Satrapies of Aria, Arachosia, Gedrosia and the Paropanisadai. But the cession of the last Satrapy is questioned by Dr. Tarn, who thinks that the ceded territory was "predominantly Indian in blood"* and much less extensive than is supposed by Dr. Smith. As regards the matrimonial alliance between Seleukos and Chandragupta, Dr. Tarn practically accepts the story of the latter or

* Tarn, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

Bindusara marrying a Seleucid princess, and regards Bindusara or Asoka as a Seleucid on the distaff side, according to the same author this relationship would best explain the friendly intercourse between the Maurya and Syrian Empires* There is no doubt that after the treaty Seleukos sent his representative Megasthenes to Patali putra

Chandragupta's Alleged Abdication After his grand triumph over Seleukos we come to the last days of Chandragupta Jain tradition connects the exodus of Bhadrabahu with 12 000 followers and his settlement at Sravana Belgola (Mysore), with a severe famine in Northern India lasting for twelve years The available archaeological evidence in support of the story is far from being contemporary, not earlier than the seventh century A D It is said that Chandragupta abdicated and accompanied Bhadrabahu as his humble disciple Soon after the Jain settlement in South India the pontiff died, and Chandragupta followed him to the other world twelve years later The repetition of the number twelve throws some suspicion on the story The Jain tradition under consideration is however generally accepted as in the main historical At his abdication or death Chandragupta was probably about forty five years of age

Extent of the Maurya Empire The Nanda dominions, which did not include Kalinga on the eve of the Maurya revolution but covered the Gangetic Valley, passed over to Chandragupta who acquired the Panjab and Sindh by destroying the Macedonian garrisons and extended his authority from Malwa to the Arabian Sea His treaty with Seleukos added a few trans Indus provinces including Gandhara to his empire, but it is uncertain whether it touched the Hindu Kush and gave him a "scientific" North Western frontier The extension of his power to South India is improbable, and the vague references of

* *Ibid* p 152

Justin, Plutarch and the author of *Mahavamsa* need not be interpreted strictly. The Jain story of Chandragupta's domicile in the South does not imply his retirement to a corner of his empire. It is better to confine the political authority of the first Maurya to Northern India, excluding *Assam but including portions of Afghanistan and Baluchistan*, and corresponding broadly to the *chakravartikshetra* of the *Arthasastra*.

SECTION III. ADMINISTRATION

Triumph of Monarchy. The growth of imperialism and monarchical power from the days of Bimbisara and Ajatasatru was prejudical to the republican institutions which graced the age of the Buddha. On the eve of the Macedonian invasion such institutions flourished mostly in the Indus Valley and Rajputana, and Poros was steadily digging their grave. Alexander encouraged the policy of Poros by adding to his territorial possessions, and his striking success revealed to thinking minds the weakness characteristic of small non-monarchical states—internal dissension and inefficiency of external defence. Kautilya and Chandragupta were no lovers of the republican ideal, and their persistent effort was directed to crushing everything that crossed the path of imperialism and consolidation. They were largely but not completely successful in their crusade against the non-monarchical political system.

Morally Controlled. Though Kautilya was an uncompromising monarchist, he did not stand for royal absolutism. He knew that the chariot of the state could not move on a single wheel and recognised the necessity for ministerial assistance to royalty. His injunction that the king should listen to the opinions of his ministers is interpreted by some as lending support to the conception of a limited monarchy. The enumeration of governmental forms—royal, ministerial and royal-ministerial—occurs in connection with a *sushkakalaha* or feigned misunder-

standing between Kautilya and Chandragupta in the *Mudrarakshasa*, and the former's preference for the second form need not be regarded as, and is not, the real view of the Arthasastrakara, who was indubitably an arch monarchist Still he makes concessions to the aristocratic and democratic principles of government While stretching the king's activity to its extreme limit and emphasising the value of his personal conduct of public business, Kautilya endorses the wisdom of collective deliberation and lays down that " as a student his teacher a son his father, and a servant his master, the king shall follow him " (*purohita* or chief priest) Another dictum underlined by him is as follows " In the happiness of his subjects lies his (the king's) happiness, in their welfare his welfare, whatever pleases himself he shall not consider as good but whatever pleases his subjects he shall consider as good " In short his conception is that of a learned and morally disciplined monarch, advised by well qualified ministers and bent on his subjects' welfare He subscribes to the Social Contract theory and regards the king as a public servant though of the highest order, and his salary as wages for the performance of his duties He further obliges him to follow the injunctions of the *Sastras* Moreover, local autonomy, political and economic must to some extent have reduced the king's power Examples in the *Jatakas* and other early works of royalty weeping over its impotence or its limited power could only be regarded as exceptional Still there is no denying the fact that the monarch was no autocrat Checks on his authority, more moral than constitutional are prescribed, but their practical operation, though probable, cannot be asserted Dr F W Thomas observes " It is as guardian of the social (including domestic and religious) order and defence against anarchical oppression that the king is entitled to his revenue, failing to perform this duty, he takes upon himself a corresponding share of the national sin Educated in these precepts among a moralising

people, he would have been more than human had he escaped the obsession of this conception of his duties."*

Imperial Government. A do-nothing king was foreign to ancient Indian ideas. The theory of royal activity went to the root of the polity. The king's time-table is perhaps too heavy, and Dr. Fleet thinks it most natural and least surprising that many kings abdicated to shake off their public burdens. The Prime Minister, the Purohita, the Senapati and the Yuvaraja belonged to the inner circle of ministers. Besides these there were other great officers in charge of finance, public works, and royal correspondence, and a large number of superintendents presiding over the departments of commerce, weights and measures, tolls, weaving, agriculture, excise, slaughter-house, prostitution, passports, urban administration, etc. The government undertook constituent and ministrant functions and even some socialistic activities. Besides the regulation of commerce, trade and industry, it controlled state monopolies and manufactures and poor relief for orphans, widows and disabled government servants, civil and military. The performance of such functions by the state necessitated an army of officials, a well-organised civil service.

Finance. Public income was mainly derived from cultivated land (normally the state's demand being one-sixth of the produce), pastures, forests, mines, etc., besides the extra income from irrigated land. Further there were receipts from customs and excise, and license fees from workmen, artisans and traders and for gambling and passports. The miscellaneous items included fines from law-courts, special taxes and *pranaya* or benevolences. The main items of expenditure related to the king and his household, government servants, army, public works, poor relief, religion, etc. The Collector-General was in charge of the collection of revenue and the

* *C. H. I.*, I. p. 492.

Treasurer General, whose office was efficiently organised, in charge of payments There was an excellent system of accounts and audit The charge of over taxation cannot be easily advanced as we do not know the burden on the individual of the tax system as a whole Since the material prosperity of the empire was great, the ability of its subjects to pay must have been equally substantial

Census Though the taking of census commenced in ancient Rome in the reign of Servius Tullius (6th century B C), an imperial census on modern lines was first attempted by Julius Caesar in the first century B C The Maurya census of the fourth century B C reminds us of the later Roman system The objects of the former were political and economic to control the movements of population, indigenous and foreign, and to ensure the stability and health of the state, to gauge accurately the military resources of the empire, and to form an estimate of its material prosperity so as to secure an equitable basis for taxation The village officials were to number the people, according to their caste and occupation, the slaves and freemen, the young and old, men and women, and record their character, income and expenditure They were also to count the animals in each house The census of towns was taken on the same lines by municipal officers who had also to register the movements of foreigners and non residents by obtaining information about them from charitable institutions and from heads of households entertaining them The data thus collected were checked and controlled by superior officers and collated with those supplied independently by *charas* or spies The census was a permanent institution a department run by permanent officials under the Collector General, not a decennial affair as it is now in our country

Army and Navy The four *angas* (limbs or branches) of the army were elephants, horses, foot soldiers and chariots The naval and transport and supply

departments made the divisions six. Megasthenes mentions six Boards of five members each to control the military administration. The various branches were well organised and paid by the government. The technique of warfare was scientific and efficient. Much attention was given to the construction and maintenance of forts, and the arts of mining and counter-mining were well understood. "In short the Indians possessed the art of war."* The navy was not conspicuous except in transport. The ethical side of the military code as evidenced in practice produced a good impression on the Greeks; on the battlefield the wounded and disarmed were decently treated and those who had given up their arms were saved from butchery; the civil population and the agriculturists were not molested. But in diplomacy, aggression and Machiavellism were triumphant. All the resources of the intellect were employed to compass the ruin of the neighbour, the proverbial enemy, and *kutayuddha* (treacherous war) was practised. No doubt such practices were allowed only in emergencies, but expediency should not be confounded with morality.

Criminal Law. The punishments awarded were fines, whipping, mutilation and death. Torture was employed. The capital crimes were man-slaughter, maiming an artisan, destroying a dam, theft of 40 *panas* (about Rs. 30) and more, etc. The criminal law was very severe. There were many opportunities for blackmailing the well-to-do in connection with political offences. But it must be remembered that man's inhumanity to man is the most disgraceful chapter in human history, and in the domain of criminal law progress among the nations of the world has been amazingly slow. The criminal law of England in the first half of the last century was so barbarous that the theft of five shillings was a capital offence. Even after Peel's reforms, cattle or letter stealing was punished with death. In 1833 a boy nine years old was sentenced

* *Ibid.*, p. 490.

to death for stealing some painter's colours worth two pence through a broken window, but the sentence was not carried out thanks to executive intervention *

Provincial and Local Government The empire of Chandragupta seems to have been divided into four provinces the home province, consisting of the *Prachya* region and the Madhyadesa controlled directly from Pataliputra by the emperor, the North Western or Taxila, the Western or Malwa with its headquarters at Ujjain, and Gujarat and Kathiawar governed by Pushyagupta from Girnar The provincial governers were as far as possible members of the royal family Light is thrown by Megasthenes on the municipal administration of Patali putra and the urban government described by Kautilya must have been common to the cities of the empire Much is made of the latter's alleged failure to mention the Board system of administration so well noted by the Greek ambassador What appeared worthy of record to the foreigner might have been omitted by the indigenous author as quite ordinary The principle of majority decision and the *panchayat system were known to* Kautilya After all, the system elaborated by Megasthenes is the *panchayat* organisation, and the application of its democratic principle to military administration is a little surprising Still the *Arthasastra* says that each of the four principal *divisions of the army should be presided* over by many non permanent chiefs *(bahunukhya, anitya)* At any rate this discrepancy between Kautilya and Megasthenes is no ground for assigning them to different ages The six municipal committees of Pataliputra looked after *(a)* Industries, *(b)* Foreigners *(c)* Census *(d)* Trade, *(e)* Manufactures and their sale, *(f)* and collection of the sales tax The attention given to foreigners living and dead is noteworthy, and constitutes decisive proof of the commercial intercourse of India with

* Sir Spencer Walpole *History of England from 1815*, II, p. 132

Western Asia and beyond. The Mayor or Prefect of the town was called *Nagaraka*, and subordinate officers helped him in his executive work. Village administration was in the hands of the *Gramani* or headman advised by the *panchayat*, and his official superiors were the *Gopa* in charge of five to ten villages and the *Sthanika* with a more extensive jurisdiction. Above these were the District Officers and Governors (*Pradesikas* and *Rajukas*), probably graded as *Mahamatras*.

Merits and Defects of the Administration. Organisation was conspicuous throughout. There is no doubt that political differentiation marched abreast of political integration. The separation of the civil and military departments is remarkable, seeing that Akbar in the sixteenth century A.D. had a combined civil and military service manned by *mansabdars*. The standing army of the Mauryas maintained by the state was markedly different from the feudal forces of that grand Mughal. The latter's army was not however wanting in organisation, but its central defect was inefficiency; organisation is not synonymous with efficiency. The Mauryan government was so efficient that it created and maintained an extensive empire and made it respected by Seleukos. The effectiveness of the civil administration may be inferred from the general progress of the age. Peace and order was established so securely that the distant parts of the empire were controlled from Pataliputra. Some of the modern features of the Mauryan organisation like the separation of civil and military services, the census, the departments of the central government, the extensive government functions, and the municipal councils indicate the great advance made in the fourth century B.C. But the seamy side of the administrative system cannot be overlooked. Apart from the severity of the criminal law, the restrictions on individual freedom were numerous. Besides the passport system, the tyranny of spies and

agents provocateurs must have made many citizens' lives wretched Above all, the atmosphere must have been vitiated by the Kautilyan maxim of success at any cost, and the moral tone of the administration could not have been high Lastly, the ideal of maximum royal activity does not harmonise with the system of hereditary monarchy, which in such circumstances could only produce giants or pigmies

SECTION IV. BINDUSARA (*c* 301—*c* 273 B C)

Conquest of South India The inclusion in Asoka's empire of a substantial part of cis-Vindhyan India raises the question of its conquest There is no definite ascription of such a conquest to Chandragupta, and although our knowledge of the events of Asoka's early regnal years is imperfect, we may regard Kalinga as the only region conquered by him To Bindusara is ascribed by Taranatha, the Tibetan historian of Buddhism who completed his work in A D 1608 on the basis of the records and traditions of his country, the destruction, with the help of Kautilya, of the kings and ministers of about sixteen towns as well as the annexation of the territory between the Eastern and Western oceans The association of Kautilya with King Bindusara is supported by Hemachandra The Buddhist author of the *Arya Manjusri-Mulakalpa* says that Chanakya, "the bad Brahman," served during three reigns including that of Bindusara, who ascended the throne as a minor and became "bold, eloquent, and sweet tongued"* The details extracted here are valuable The minority of Bindusara might explain the discrepancy regarding his reign period in the *Puranas* (25 years) and Buddhist accounts (28 years) and negative the possibility of Bindusara's conquest of the South as Crown Prince. His boldness justifies the epithet with which he was honoured by the Greeks—*Amitraghata* or *Amitrakhada* (slayer or consumer of his

* K P Jayaswal *An Imperial History of India* (1934), p 16

Chandragupta's accession and 301 B.C. for his abdication or death.* The *Jain* date 312 B.C. may be regarded as that of Chandragupta's acquisition of Kathiawar. That he reigned for twenty-four years is stated in the *Puranas* and the *Mahavamsa*, but as regards Bindusara's reign-period, twenty-five and twenty-eight years are given by those authorities respectively. But as Buddhist evidence is not hostile to the first three Mauryas, it may be preferred to the Puranic, just as Puranic evidence to the Buddhist for the Saisunagas and the Nandas. Therefore accepting twenty-four and twenty-eight years for the first two Mauryas respectively, we may place Asoka's accession, as Dr. Smith does, in 325—(24 + 28) = 273 B.C., and his coronation in 273—4 (interval between his accession and coronation, according to the *Mahavamsa*) = 269 B.C. His final date is 269—37 (his reign-period according to the Buddhist authority) = 232 B.C.

Another Scheme. Another method of arriving at Asoka's initial regnal date is to start from the probable date of Rock Edict XIII, which mentions Antiyoka (Antiochos Theos of Syria, 261—246 B.C.), Turamaya (Ptolemy Philadelphos of Egypt, 285—247 B.C.), Antikina (Antigonos Gonatas of Macedonia, 278—239 B.C.), Maga (Magas of Cyrene, 285?—258 B.C.) and Alikasundara (Alexander of Epirus, 272—258? B.C., or of Corinth). Obviously these rulers are referred to in a way which leaves no doubt that they were alive when Rock Edict XIII was published. Therefore the date of this Edict must lie between 261 and 258, or allowing some time for foreign news to reach India, between 260 or 259 and 257 or 256 B.C., and could not be later

statement. Consequently the fourteen Rock Edicts were probably issued about his thirteenth regnal year. Thus this regnal year may be equated with 256 B.C, and his coronation (from which his regnal years are counted) assigned to 256 + 13 = 269 B.C. Apparently this way of determining Asoka's date is independent of the date of Chandragupta's accession; but without the guidance of the latter, it is difficult to identify all the Western dynasts mentioned. Therefore, as the date of Chandragupta is founded on his synchronism with Alexander the Great, this synchronism is regarded as "the sheet-anchor" of ancient Indian chronology. The incertitudes of Asokan chronology are mostly of a minor character: the exact date of Chandragupta's accession; the actual reign-period of Bindusara; and a few details about the dates of the Western potentates.

Chronology of the Edicts. A few scholars have taken the Rock Edicts as posterior to the Pillar Edicts and assigned them to his twenty-eight regnal year, on the ground that Pillar Edict VII refers to *Dhammalipis* (writings on *Dhamma*) inscribed on stone pillars and slabs, and not on *parvatas* or rocks, and fails to mention the philanthropic and missionary activities of Asoka recorded in Rock Edicts II and XIII. The first omission pointed out is no omission at all; Pillar Edict VII concludes: "This scripture of the Law of Piety, wheresoever pillars of stone or tablets of stone exist, must there be recorded so that it may long endure" (The translation of the edicts quoted here and elsewhere is that of Dr. Smith in his *Asoka*, 1920.) Here the reference is specifically to P. E. VII, and therefore no mention of *parvatas* may be expected The second omission is explained in Rock Edict XIV itself: "This scripture of the Law of Piety has been written by command of His Sacred *Majesty the King, sometimes condensed, sometimes* of medium length, and sometimes expanded, and everything is not brought together everywhere For great is

my dominion, and much has been written, and much shall I cause to be written." An analysis of the regnal years found in the Rock and Pillar Edicts gives the clue to their relative chronology. Rock Edicts III and IV were published in the twelfth regnal year; Rock Edicts V, VIII and XIII refer to the years, thirteen, ten and eight respectively; Pillar Edicts I, IV, V and VI were published in the twenty-sixth year, and VII in the twenty-seventh year (all the years expired, not current). There is no Rock Edict referring to a year later than thirteen Thirdly, P. E. VII elaborates the ideas of the Rock Edicts and generalises on the methods suited to the promotion of *Dhamma;* the *ahimsa* doctrine stressed in the Rock and other edicts is fully developed in P. E. V, which gives a list of animals to be protected from slaughter and injury. Therefore the *priority* of the Rock Edicts to the Pillar Edicts is quite clear. The former may be assigned to the 12th and 13th regnal years, *i.e.*, about 256 B.C., and the latter to the 26th and 27th regnal years, *i.e.*, about 242 B.C. Some versions of the Minor Rock Edict I mention the intention of Asoka to publish inscriptions on rocks and pillars; M. R. E. II gives the bare outlines of the *Dhamma* developed in the Rock and Pillar Edicts; therefore the Minor Rock Edicts and the Bhabru Edict must be regarded as the earliest inscriptions of Asoka and assigned to about 257 B.C., *i.e.*, four years after his conversion to Buddhism in 261 B.C. The two Kalinga Edicts anticipate the ideas of the Rock Edicts and may be assigned to 257—6 B.C.; the four Minor Pillar Edicts obviously connected with the Third Buddhist Council, to 242—32 B.C.; the Rummindei Pillar Edict is dated in the 20th regnal year of Asoka and the Nigliva Pillar inscription is connected with it; therefore these two records may be assigned to 249 B.C.*

Sources : Inscriptions. The inscriptions of Asoka, unique in the annals of Epigraphy, are sufficient for all

* Mookerji, *Asoka*, (1928), pp. 208-14.

practical purposes for forming an idea of his personality and greatness Their number and variety coupled with their dates in regnal years increase their value as contemporary records, composed under the orders of the great emperor himself Their very provenance gives significant indications to the historian Their language is Pali with provincial dialectical variations of Prakrit, and their script is Brahmi except in the North West where Kharoshthi is used At Brahmagiri (Mysore) however, the word, scribe, is written in the latter script There are frequent repetitions so much so that, excluding them, all the inscriptions contain only about 5,000 words The style, forceful and dignified, could only be that of a noble soul

Rock Edicts The much discussed Minor Rock Edict I reveals the phases of Asoka's religious evolution and points out the value of persistent effort The second Edict is a summary of the moral code inculated by the emperor obedience to parents, kindness to relations and animals reverence for the teacher, and devotion to truth The Bhabra Edict expresses Asoka's faith in the *triratna* of Buddhism—the Buddha, the *Dhamma* and the Sangha—and emphasises the value of certain portions of the Buddhist Canon for the clergy and the laity Rock Edicts I and II exhibit his deep concern for the comforts of man and beast and the provision made by him to that effect Rock Edict III mentions official transfers once in five years to popularise the moral code Rock Edict IV records his progress in *ahimsa* Rock Edict V outlines the functions of the *Dharmamahamatras* In Rock Edict VI Asoka shows his abiding interest in his 'subjects' welfare and orders prompt attention to administrative business Rock Edicts VII and VIII emphasise self discipline and mental purity and the value of pilgrimages to holy places like Bodh Gaya, visited by him in his tenth regnal year, instead of pleasure trips Rock Edict IX indicates the futility of birth and marriage-ceremonies and other

ceremonies performed by men, especially by women, and the superiority of performing one's moral duties. Rock Edicts X and XI say that the practice of the *Dhamma* is true glory and true charity. Rock Edict XII is a classic in religious toleration, showing the broad-mindedness and grandeur of Asoka. Rock-Edict XIII describes the disastrous consequences of his conquest of Kalinga and regards *Dhammavijaya* or conquest by the *Dhamma* as conquest *par excellence; it* mentions his missions to various parts of India and to the Greek world. Rock Edict XIV is a postscript to the thirteen Rock Edicts. The Kalinga Edicts contain instructions to officials regarding the administration of his only conquest, and evince his anxiety to conciliate the people and heal the wounds of his late war. It is significant that Rock Edict XIII describing the conquest of Kalinga is not found there.

Pillar Edicts. Pillar Edicts I to III continue the subject of *Dhamma*, and IV contains administrative instructions to governors. V enumerates the regulations regarding the promotion of *ahimsa*, lays down the dictum that "the living must not be fed with the living," and mentions the annual release of prisoners. VI is a supplement to Rock Edict XII. Pillar Edict VII, "the testament of Asoka," is a summary of his efforts to promote the *Dhamma* within his own dominions. The Minor Pillar Edicts I to III lay down the punishment for schismatics so that "the Sangha may be united and of long duration." The Rummindei inscription records Asoka's visit to the Buddha's birth-place and his reduction of the land-revenue of the locality to one-eighth.

Historical Value of the Edicts. Though Asoka's epigraphs are religious documents, they throw abundant light on many aspects of his life and reign. The picture embraces the whole of India and takes us beyond her frontiers. But Asoka's name is found

only in the Maski (the Nizam's State) Edict discovered in 1915, in other records his title *Devanampiya Piyadasi Raja* (beloved of the gods, gracious king) is used As his object in issuing the edicts was moral and spiritual, he omits many details relevant from other points of view. Rock Edict XIII records the number of persons killed and captured, but the cause of the war is not stated Though there is no questioning the veracity of Asoka, some of his statements are hard to understand For example, the same edict says "Even where the envoys of His Sacred Majesty do not penetrate, these people too, hearing His Sacred Majesty's ordinance based upon the Law of Piety and his instruction in that law, practise and will practise the Law" Further, to interpret the edicts properly the help of Buddhist Literature and of the *Arthasastra* is necessary Supplementary information may be gleaned from Rudradaman I's Girnar inscription, which mentions Asoka's name The monumental remains are indispensable to the study of Mauryan art

The Ceylonese Chronicles The *Dipavamsa* and the *Mahavamsa* were compiled in the fourth and sixth centuries A.D respectively, on the basis of older documents Dr Smith used to thunder against the mendacity of their unscrupulous monkish authors, but changed from an attitude of absolute scepticism in 1901 to the extent of recognising their "solid merits" in 1919 Mahanaman, the author of the *Mahavamsa*, no doubt indulges in fiction and grotesque exaggeration and exhibits sectarian prejudice, but the accusation of intentional falsehood against him is generally rejected After the "conversion" of Dr Smith, a few scholars continue to hold his old opinion, dismiss the Buddhist account as concocted for rejuvenating the declining Church and regard Asoka as a Brahmanist from start to finish But Dr Geiger's painstaking analysis of the internal evidence has revealed that the Ceylonese Chronicles "at least wished to tell the truth" Their accounts of the conversion of Ceylon, Asoka's Buddhist

propaganda, and the Council of Pataliputra are indispensable to a student of his history. No doubt they looked at men and things through coloured spectacles, but could not have drawn everything from their imagination. They are silent on the Kalinga war and omit Asoka's missions to the West. They afford no help to the study of his administration. With all these defects, they have contributed in however small a degree to the sober history of that emperor. Scholars are generally agreed that the interval of two hundred and eighteen years between the Buddha and Asoka is reliable. It is confirmed by the Tibetan tradition that Asoka, the contemporary of the Chinese Emperor Shi-hwang-ti (246—210 B.C.), visited Khotan two hundred and fifty years after the Buddha's death. Later Chinese Buddhist travellers like Fa-hien and Hiuen Tsang are occasionally serviceable. Still Asoka himself is his best historian; his autobiography—the edicts—is a marvellous combination of history and literature.

SECTION VI. THE KALINGA WAR

Early Life of Asoka. Asoka served his father as Viceroy of Taxila and Ujjain in succession and was probably raised to the dignity of Crown Prince, though he was not the eldest son of Bindusara. He seems to have been originally a follower of Brahmanism (without inclining towards Jainism or Buddhism), consuming potfuls of meat, enjoying the pleasures of the chase and the bottle, and exhibiting interest in dancing and such amusements. He lived a worldly life but without any tinge of vice. From his Viceroyalty of Ujjain he hastened to the sick-bed of his father. On the death of Bindusara about 273 B.C. the succession seems to have been disputed, and Asoka succeeded in securing the throne against his elder brother, Susima. Probably the contest was prolonged, and hence the necessity to postpone his coronation for four years till about 269 B.C. Some of his edicts are dated in regnal

years, reckoned from his consecration. The literary accounts, Northern and Southern, are unanimous in stating that Asoka's succession to the throne was not smooth. The suggestion of Senart is far-fetched that the war of succession is only an echo of the Kalinga war. In R. E. V. Asoka refers, not to his brothers, but to their female establishments The *Mahavamsa* says that Bindusara had 101 sons by 16 wives, that Asoka excelled all others in warlike qualities, that he became emperor by killing 99 of his brothers, that after his coronation he elevated his uterine brother Tissa to the office of Viceregent, and that before and after his conversion to Buddhism he was known as Chandasoka or wicked Asoka and Dharmasoka or Virtuous Asoka respectively. In spite of its exaggerations the Ceylonese account cannot be dismissed as a pure invention. It is not improbable that Bindusara had innumerable children by his 16 wives; Bodawpaya, the most powerful king of Burma (A.D. 1782—1819), died at the age of 75, leaving 122 children and 208 grandchildren. The edicts themselves give a contrasted picture of Asoka before and after the Kalinga war which turned him into a Buddhist. Therefore the theory of a disputed succession to Bindusara is not unfounded.

War with Kalinga c 261 B.C. The cause and course of Asoka's first and last war are unknown. He expatiates in Rock Edict XIII on the effects of the war on himself and his policy. But there is a detail which gives the clue to the origin of that war. He refers to Kalinga as "a country previously unconquered," that is to say, by his father or grandfather; in plain language, the war was one of unprovoked aggression, and the possibility of revolt being its cause is excluded. The mantle of his father fell upon him, and the set-back to Bindusara's triumphant progress in South India transferred the completion of his task to his son. But the terrible slaughter and unnumbered deaths on the unnamed battle-field

lacerated the heart of Asoka and drew him to the teachings of a man (the Buddha) who is described as "an ocean of wisdom and compassion" (The *Amarakosa*). He was constitutionally incapable of shedding crocodile tears. The unmerited sufferings of the clergy and the laity of all denominations leading virtuous lives filled him with pain and shame. He realised the wickedness of worldly conquest and the beauty of moral and spiritual triumph. The first effects of the Kalinga war were on Asoka himself. "Directly after" that war in his eighth regnal year (expired), he became a Buddhist and persevered in purifying and beautifying his own life, so much so that he turned out to be an embodiment of Buddhist virtue. But he says nothing about the person who initiated him into Buddhism. The war resulted in the annexation of Kalinga to the Maurya Empire, and thus was witnessed the culmination of political integration which had been started by Bimbisara and Ajatasatru. At no time after Asoka did India become so much unified politically under Hindu sovereigns as in the reign of that Maurya. Further he gradually introduced the Buddhist spirit into his administration and resolved to change his foreign policy in the direction of peace. Thus the Kalinga war produced far-reaching effects on Asoka and his policy. Still it should be remembered that he was too much of an imperialist to effect a rendition of Kalinga. His pacific policy was not unqualified or absolute.. "Should any one do him harm, that too must be borne with by His Sacred Majesty as far as it can possibly be borne with.....They (the forest folk) are bidden to turn from their (evil) ways that they be not chastised." His sane imperialist outlook "maintained the balance between the spiritual and non-spiritual factors in life—a balance indispensable to the progress and stability of civilisation."*

* Sathianathaler, *Was Asoka an Unqualified Pacifist?* (*Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar Commemoration Volume*, 1941, p. 527).

After the War. About 261 B C. Asoka became a *Sakya upasaka* (Buddhist lay disciple) and more than two and a half years after, a *Bhikshu* (monk) or a *Bhikshugatika* (one who conforms to the monk's ways) In 259 B C he gave up hunting, visited Bodh Gaya, and organised missions Special officers to supervise and speed up the progress of *Dhamma* were appointed in 256 B C In 249 B C he went to the birth place of the Buddha, the Lumbini garden, near Kapilavastu According to Northern Indian tradition he visited also the other holy places of Buddhism—Saranth, Sravasti and Kusinagara—and was escorted by his *guru*, Upagupta. At the request of Tissa, a mission under Mahendra was sent to Ceylon About 240 B C Asoka convoked the Third Buddhist Council at Pataliputra in order to strengthen the Sangha against internal mischief mongers. It is not likely that he abdicated He died about 232 B C, perhaps at Taxila Asoka's career may be unequally divided into two periods—273 to 261 B C and 261 to 232 B C Though the sharp contrast between the wicked and virtuous emperor made by the *Mahavamsa* is untenable, it is clear that the Kalinga war marks a seminal epoch in his life and reign and in the history of India and of the world "For eight-and twenty years Asoka worked sanely for the real needs of men" (H G Wells) The real needs of humanity are peace, food and medicine, true religious consolation beneficent administration and culture Asoka ministered to all these needs in an admirable manner He educated his subjects in the ideals of life and worked for amity among the sectaries and for social solidarity He realised the human need for reasonable amusements and diversions, besides erecting buildings and executing sculptures, he provided for divine shows, approved of good *samajas*, and encouraged *dharmayatras* or pilgrimages

Extent of the Empire The North West frontier as demarcated by Chandragupta and Seleukos must have

continued unchanged, as friendly relations subsisted between Bindusara and Asoka and the Western powers. Asoka mentions Antiochos of Syria as if he were his next-door neighbour, and his Rock Edicts are found on the other side of the Indus at Shahbazgarhi. Hiuen Tsang testifies to his building activity in Afghanistan. The tradition as recorded by Kalhana avers that he executed public works in Kashmir and built a new capital. That the Nepalese Tarai was imperial territory is clear from the Rummindei Pillar inscription. Local tradition and monuments indicate that Nepal was within the Maurya Empire. Fa-hien and Hiuen Tsang mention Asokan *stupas* at Tamralipti (Tamluk) and other places in Bengal. Rock Edict XIII and the Kalinga Edicts prove Asoka's annexation and administration of Kalinga. In the region between the Krishna and the Tungabhadra (the Raichur Doab) Minor Rock Edicts were discovered at Maski in 1915, and at Kopbal in 1931, on the Gavimath and Palkigundu hills, midway between Maski and Siddapura. Between the Hagari (tributary of the Tungabhadra) and the North Pennar, the Minor Rock Edict and Rock Edicts I to XIII were brought to light in 1929 at Jonnagiri, Yerragudi (near Gooty, Kurnool District). This discovery is of great importance because the Minor Rock Edict gives additional information regarding the dissemination of the royal message by officials and non-officials and because of the existence of the Rock Edicts on the southern border of the empire. Between the Tungabhadra and the Hagari there are the Minor Rock Edicts at Siddapura, Jatinga-Rameswara and Brahmagiri (all in the Chitaldrug District, Mysore), discovered in 1891. In Rock Edict II the Tamil kingdoms are mentioned as neighbours and bracketed with Syria, etc. Rock Edict XIII again puts those kingdoms in the category of neighbouring states along with the dominions of Greek princes. Therefore the Chitaldrug District of Mysore was the southernmost part of the Maurya Empire, as the Edicts discovered

between 1915 and 1931 are to the North and North East of it The author however thinks that the southern boundary of Asoka's empire should have run roughly along North Latitude 12°* The Rock Edicts at Sopara near Bombay and at Girnar in Kathiawar are evidence of Asoka's authority in Western India Moreover the Girnar record of Rudradaman I mentions the engineering works executed for Lake Sudarsana by Tushaspha on behalf of Asoka In short the Maurya Empire under Asoka was much larger than British India at the present day, it was more extensive than the Roman Empire at its greatest extent in the second and third centuries A D A few scholars however regard the mere existence of Asoka's epigraphs in South India as no adequate proof of his sovereignty over the region in which they are found on the ground that the publication of ethical dissertations might well have been permitted outside the empire But the Minor Rock Edict I outlining Asoka's religious progress during four years records his instructions to the *Mahamatras* of Isila conveyed through the Viceroy and ministers of Suvarnagiri Thus the technique of official communication is observed and there is no doubt that the provenance of Asoka's edicts indicates the extent of his empire

SECTION VII ASOKA AND BUDDHISM

Asoka as Buddhist There is no doubt that in the beginning Asoka was not a Buddhist The *Mahavamsa* and Rock Edicts I and VIII giving reminiscences of his early life would make him a follower of the orthodox religion and negative the opinion of a few scholars that he was a Jain to start with because he favoured the Jains and Ajivikas in the light of the edicts and introduced according to Kalhana and Abul Fazl Jainism into Kashmir A few scholars deny that Asoka was a Buddhist and that his *Dhamma* is Buddhistic Some others say

* Sathianathaier *Studies in the Ancient History of Tondamandalam* (1944) pp 3 10

that he was a Buddhist but his *Dhamma* is not particularly *Buddhistic*. But a large number of scholars maintain that Asoka was a Buddhist and that his *Dhamma* was intended for the Buddhist laity. While some would regard him as a monk, others describe him as an *upasaka*. There is also the view that his *Dhamma* may be regarded as a universal religion. But the best view is that he became an *upasaka* and formulated his *Dhamma* from the point of view of the Buddhist laity. Asoka was unquestionably a Buddhist because the Minor Rock Edict I mentions that he became an *upasaka*, and the Maski version uses the term *Sakya-upasaka*. A Buddhist *upasaka* must have "taken refuge in the Buddha, the *Dhamma* and the Sangha." Asoka's entry into the Sangha may be open to doubt, and the relevant passage is taken by some to mean mere association with the Order. The Bhabru Edict is the most definite evidence of his religion. It is addressed to the Sangha and expresses his faith in the Buddhist *triratna* and his conviction that everything said by *Bhagavan* Buddha has been well and truly said. Further, Buddhism is referred to as the *Saddhamma*, and seven passages from the Buddhist Canon are placed before the clergy and the laity for their constant study and meditation. The point is raised that, since Asoka spoke to the monks, he spoke in a way suited to the occasion. But could similar addresses of his to the Brahmanical or Jain Order be produced? If he had been a non-Buddhist in constant association with all religious denominations, why this partiality to the Buddhist Sangha? Does Asoka mention anywhere what *Bhagavan* Mahavira and Brahmanical Rishis have said? Does he refer to any other religion than Buddhism as the *Saddhamma*? The Minor Pillar Edicts I to III deal with his measures for strengthening the Buddhist Sangha against internal dissensions so that "the Sangha may be united and of long duration." Do his inscriptions show that he desired and worked for the union and longevity of other sects in the

way he did for Buddhism? He visited the Bodhi tree in his tenth regnal year and the place of the Buddha's birth in his twentieth regnal year and exclaimed "Here was *Bhagavan* Buddha born," and further, reduced the land tax of the latter locality by one-half. Would a Brahmanist speak against ceremonies like Asoka in Rock Edict IX? He points out the futility of ceremonies, and defines true ceremonial in the manner of the Buddha pouring new wine into old bottles Would a Brahmanist prohibit sacrificial slaughter of animals as Asoka did, according to R E I?He organised missionary activity on a large scale in the spirit of the Buddha Further, according to literary evidence, he held the Third Buddhist Council and promoted the fortunes of Buddhism in other ways I tsing refers to a statue of Asoka in Buddhist monastic garb It is said that the edicts do not mention the word or conception of *nirvana* and that the goal of heaven is placed before the people But Asoka did not preach doctrinal Buddhism to his subjects The Buddha pointed out to heaven as the goal of the householder, and Asoka addressed his subjects who were householders In his address to the Sangha—the Bhabru Edict—he explicitly and unreservedly endorses the *Buddhavachana* and therefore implicitly, *nirvana*, the Four Truths, the Eightfold Path, etc Buddhism as the grandest protest against Vedic sacrifices, stressed the doctrine of *ahimsa* though not to the extent that Jainism did In the edicts the emphasis on *ahimsa* is fundamental, and from this point of view alone could Asoka be regarded as a Buddhist. The numerous modifications of that doctrine which he tolerated in order to carry his subjects with him would reveal him as a non Jain

Fleet's View Dr Fleet's view is that the Minor Rock Edict I, giving the number 256 at the end was issued 256 years after the Buddha's death *i e*, 256—218 (interval between that event and Asoka's coronation) = 38 years after the latter event Since he reigned only for thirty-

seven years, that edict must be relegated to the period of his retirement after abdication. Asoka became a Buddhist in his thirtieth regnal year and a nominal monk two and a half years subsequently. In the thirty-eighth regnal year he abdicated and became a true monk. From his place of retirement, he proclaimed Buddhism as the true religion. But this interpretation is not generally accepted as 256 is not treated as a date and as there is no positive evidence for Asoka's abdication. Moreover, Rock Edict XIII definitely says that his appreciation of Buddhism commenced immediately after the Kalinga war. Dr. Fleet thinks that no one could have been king and monk at the same time for a long time. But the role of a *Bhikshu-gatika*, if not of a *Bhikshu*, Asoka probably played.

Sources of Asoka's Dhamma. M. R. E. I. emphasises the meritoriousness and fertility of sustained exertion in the field of religion, and this doctrine of exertion is identical with that of *appamada* (earnestness) found in the *Dhammapada*. M. R. E. II adumbrates the *Dhamma*: service to father and mother, practice of *ahimsa*, love of truth, reverence for the *acharya*, and good treatment of relatives. Though this definition reminds us of the Upanishadic exhortation: "Speak the truth, practise *dharma*, and regard mother, father, *acharya* and guest as gods," the more apt parallel is the *Sigalovadasutta*. The Bhabru Edict's statement regarding the Buddha and the *Dhamma* is that of the *Anguttara Nikaya*. As regards the seven canonical texts named by Asoka in the same edict, most of them have been satisfactorily identified with passages in the Pali Canon: the first, *Vinayasamukasa* with the *Sigalovadasutta* of the *Digha Nikaya* or some other text; the second *Aliyavasani* and the third *Anagatabhayani* with passages in the *Anguttara Nikaya;* the fourth, fifth and sixth, *Munigatha, Mauneyasute* and *Upatisapasine*, with the *suttas* of the *Suttanipata;* and the seventh, *Laghulovade* with a *sutta* in the *Majjhima Nikaya*. The

Kalinga Edicts describe the *Dhamma* of the administrator moderation, justice kindness, perseverance, patience and, above all, activity, here the influence of the *Arthasastra* is clear R E III emphasises service to father and mother, liberality to friends, acquaintances relatives, Brahmans and Sramanas, and *ahimsa; vide* the *Sigalovadasutta* The *vimanas,* divine elephants and figures of the gods referred to in R E IV are mentioned in the *Vimanavatthu.* R E VI describes the king's duty, and we are reminded of the *Arthasastra,* but the latter's ideal is exclusively nationalist, while the former contemplates *Sarvalokahita* or welfare of the whole world R E IX indicates the infertility of *mangala* (ceremonies in connection with birth marriage, travel troubles etc) and the fertility of *Dhammamangala* (proper treatment of slaves and servants reverence for teachers liberality to Brahmins and Sramanas and *ahimsa*), here we see the influence of the *Mahamangalasutta* of the Pali Canon Like the *Dhammapada* R E XI stresses the excellence of *Dhammadana* R E XII on Toleration is "a development of the theme set forth in the *Sutta nipata* (D R Bhandarkar)"* Though the *Dhammavijaya* is mentioned in the *Arthasastra,* Asoka gives a new significance altogether to *Dhammavijaya* in R E XIII If his *Dhamma* is placed in its right historical setting its Buddhist character is clear We cannot point out "any other religious faith in India which in any scripture specially reserved for lay men has enumerated the ethical practices preached by Asoka in this particular lump as the *Sigalovadasutta* has done specifically for the Buddhist laity The conclusion is irresistible that the *Dhamma* inculcated by Asoka is Buddhism, such as is taught to its lay men (D R Bhandarkar)"† Asoka's indebtedness for his *Dhamma* is substantially to the Pali Canon

* Law *Buddhistic Studies* p 624
† *Ibid* p 621

Asoka as Patron of Buddhism: Missions. Many ways were explored by Asoka towards the realisation of his cherished ambition of disseminating Buddhism. His organisation of Indian and foreign missions was the most effective means of furthering his favourite object. Rock Edict XIII says that missionaries were sent to Syria, Egypt, Cyrene, Epirus and Macedonia, to the Cholas and the Pandyas, and to the North-Western and Southern parts of his empire, including the Maratha and Andhra countries. The Ceylonese Chronicles give a list of the missions organised by the Sangha, and the names of the leading missionaries mentioned are partly confirmed by the archaeological remains near Sanchi. As far as the Indian regions are concerned, the only discrepancy between the two lists relates to Suvarnabhumi if it is identified with Burma and not with the Suvarnagiri Viceroyalty (Dakhan). The mention of Ceylon in the Chronicles clears up the doubtful reference to it in the edicts. The only serious omission from the Buddhist list is the Greek world. But the historicity of the Western missions cannot be questioned in the light of Asoka's specific statement and of the prevalence of Buddhist ideas in Western Asia on the eve of the rise of Christianity. It appears, however, that Asoka's estimate of the success of his missionary labours is exaggerated, as he speaks of the triumph of the *Dhamma* not only in the whole of India and in the five kingdoms of the West, belonging to three continents, but also in places beyond the reach of his agents. Obviously the effects of missionary propaganda could not have been the same everywhere. The success of Asoka's activities in India is proved by Buddhist monuments and inscriptions from the 3rd century B.C.

Edicts. The term edict means a command from a legal superior enforced by penalties for its violation. Though a few of the inscriptions record administrative orders, a large number of them are exhortations to people to follow the prescribed ideal. They may better be called

royal proclamations partaking of the character of pontifical pronouncements. Asoka places moral precepts before all, irrespective of their caste Like the Buddha he discarded the *Varnadharma* and developed an extra national outlook His ethics is practical and rational, depending on no supernatural sanctions Though some of the virtues he inculcates are as old as Brahmanism, his discouragement of *himsa* of all kinds and his repeated references to the subject of *ahimsa* prove his Buddhist convictions. A second virtue emphasised by him in some of the noble passages of the edicts is religious toleration Though this virtue was to some extent stultified by the quarrelling Buddhist sects of the age, it was characteristic of the Buddha who loved the true Brahman. In the history of persecution, it is to be said to the credit of the Buddhist that he occupies the last place A third point stressed in the edicts is the happiness of "man and beast" Like the Buddha, Asoka preached the virtues he practised and showed how his scheme of ethical conduct could be followed by the meanest of mortals Further, by means of his edicts, he wanted to explain the measures he had taken from time to time for the promotion of the *Dhamma* Pillar Edict VII, the last of his great edicts, sums up such measures and gives the quintessence of his *Dhamma* "Compassion, liberality, truth, purity, gentleness and saintliness"

Administrative Arrangements Asoka utilised the machinery of government to further his moral and religious purpose Rock Edict III (256) directs officials of all grades to see to the promotion of the *Dhamma* The Yerragudi Minor Rock Edict I says that the message should be officially sent to the *Rajukas* who were to proclaim it to the people, and religious teachers were expected to teach it to their resident pupils, and those who had learnt it should communicate it to their relatives In 256 special officers called *Dharmamahamatras* and *Dharmayuktas* (Censors and Assistant Censors) were

hroughout India and in the Western countries with hich he had relations, and travelling was made comortable by the provision of wells and planting of trees on he roads In 243 B C was issued an ordinance (Pillar Edict V) extending to the whole empire and applicable o all people, a large numbr of animals like parrots, geese, porcupines, monkeys and rhinoceroses should under no circumstances be killed Fish was not to be sold or caught on certain days of the year, castration and branding of animals were prohibited on a few specified days Pillar Edict VII mentions the planting of banyan trees and mango-groves the digging of wells, and the construction of rest-houses and water sheds, and expresses the hope that " whatsoever meritorious deeds have been done by me, those deeds mankind will conform to and imitate " Asoka practically concludes the edict by reverting to his favourite theme " The superiority of reflection is shown by the growth of piety among men and the more complete abstention from killing animate beings and from the sacrificial slaughter of living creatures "

Consequences of Asoka's pro Buddhist Policy Asoka's grand efforts on behalf of Buddhism promoted its fortunes not only in India but also beyond her limits. Though the spread of Buddhist ideas and morality must have been much slower than was imagined by the emperor, there is no doubt that he was responsible for starting his religion on its triumphant career He was no opportunist succumbing to the growing influence of a powerful faith, but " a flawless imperial saint " who on account of his convictions gave his helping hand to a noble but struggling religion He thus became the greatest figure in Buddhist annals though next only to the Buddha. By contributing to the progress of Buddhism he crowned himself with glory But the view is advanced in some quarters that he was the grave-digger of that religion The point of the charge is that his donations to the Church made her less self reliant and more corrupt than she would other-

wise have been. The disappearance of Buddhism from India is a "terribly obscure" (Poussin) problem, and Hinayanist Asoka should not be held accountable for the later developments of Buddhism and of the chief religion opposed to it. Similarly his espousal of Buddhist pacifism is supposed by some to have debilitated the Maurya Empire, though the danger to it came after his death. He is painted by a few scholars as the arch-emasculator of India on the ground that his ardent advocacy of pacifism and vegetarianism destroyed the warlike spirit of the Indian people. But, despite his true religious spirit, he was an imperialist. Though he condemned aggressive conquests, he kept his powder dry for defence. His resolve to avoid warfare as far as possible was not the offspring of defeat; he did not make a virtue of necessity. He did not degenerate into a carpet-knight by his conversion to the religion of the prince of peace (the Buddha). Nor did India cease to be military in the centuries following his reign. Further it is said that, by his pro-Buddhist policy, he alienated from his government and his dynasty the sympathy of the followers of Brahmanism, and that his ordinances enforcing *ahimsa* with the assistance of special officers must have promoted a reaction among his Brahmanical subjects against his policy. In other words, his Buddhist zeal prepared the way for the downfall of the Maurya Empire. No doubt there must have been a flutter in the dovecotes of Brahmanical orthodoxy, and there are reasons for believing that the movement ultimately led by Pushyamitra Sunga must have started under the pressure of Asoka's religious policy. But Asoka's policy was not tyrannical, and his moderation in applying his principles and convictions and his consideration for all classes of his subjects could never be regarded as disastrous to his empire or to the welfare of his people. We have seen the character of his legislation against animal slaughter. There was room for discontent among the Brahmanists, but no adequate cause for

their revolt. Moreover, their religion was not eclipsed or superseded by Buddhism during Asoka's reign. Therefore it is difficult to subscribe to the view that his policy was fatal to Buddhism, the Maurya Empire or India.

The Doctrine of Toleration. From the wider historical and modern points of view, Asoka's formulation of the doctrine of toleration is of the greatest interest. It is astonishing that in the third century B C. a conception of religious toleration was attained which cannot be bettered even today, but our problems are more complex. Compromise, the life-blood of harmonious life, is difficult amidst the clash of opposing convictions, and particularly so in the field of religion where much can neither be proved nor disproved. A rational outlook will recognise this peculiarity of religious views and embrace the golden mean, but normally such a *via media* is rejected with scorn. Some thinkers hold that the first note of a truly cultured man is his freedom from bigotry, and regard that people as most civilised who have been tainted least by the psychology of persecution Ancient India witnessed religious strife now and then, producing more heat than light, but on the whole she was wedded to the doctrine of toleration, thanks to Asoka in particular who gave classic phrasing and admirable application to that doctrine. No doubt there are other instances and parallels, but nothing approaching to the intellectual calibre and moral exaltation of Asoka. Rock Edict II is a monument of Asoka's piety and wisdom: " His Sacred Majesty does reverence to men of all sects, whether ascetics or householders, by gifts and various forms of reverence. His Sacred Majesty, however, cares not so much for gifts or external reverence as that there should be a growth of the essence of the matter in all sects. The growth of the essence of the matter assumes various forms, but the root of it is restraint of speech, to wit, a man must not do reverence to his own sect or disparage that of another without reason. Depreciation should be for specific reasons only, because the

sects of other people all deserve reverence for one reason or another. By thus acting a man exalts his own sect, and at the same time does service to the sects of other people. By acting contrariwise a man hurts his own sect and does disservice to the sects of other people. For he who does reverence to his own sect while disparaging the sects of others wholly from attachment to his own, with intent to enhance the splendour of his own sect, in reality by such conduct inflicts the severest injury on his own sect."

Comment. While discussion and criticism are not discountenanced, it is urged that they should be informed by reason. While all religious views are not regarded as tenable to the same extent, the modicum of truth in every sectarian view is recognised. The most valuable dictum relates to the serious harm done to religion by its over-zealous votaries, oblivious of the injury they are causing to their own beloved faith. Asoka's support to various sects was discriminate. Pillar Edict VI repeats that "all denominations are reverenced by me with various forms of reverence" and adds that "personal adherence to one's own creed is the chief thing in my opinion." The restraint of speech underlined by Asoka was practised by him even when he fundamentally differed from those holding contrary views. Rock Edict IX discountenances ceremonies in a tactful manner, though the ceremonies performed by women are characterised as "trivial and worthless." He does not condemn ceremonies altogether, but says that they have "to be performed although that kind bears little fruit" and is of "doubtful efficacy." Granting that ceremonies occasionally secure the desired object, "proper treatment of slaves and servants, honour to teachers, gentleness towards living creatures and liberality towards ascetics and Brahmans" are truly spiritual even if they do not serve worldly ends. Further, like the Buddha, Asoka says that "all men are my children." Still he draws pointed attention to his favourite children—

Buddhist monks and nuns—in Minor Pillar Edict III. Though the lion's share of his patronage was bestowed upon Buddhists, he extended his benefactions to Brah mans Jains and Ajivikas According to his cave dedicatory inscriptions he provided the Ajivikas with rock cut caves near Gaya well polished inside, for their residence in 257 and 250 B C He did not stultify his doctrine of toleration by going to its logical extreme of condoning anything that might be done in the name of religion He exp cted from all sects a certain degree of conformity to his by no means rigid moral code and saw to its enforcement by special officers of high status In other words, like Akbar, he refused to tolerate practices which made his conscience uneasy We have seen how his doctrine of *ahimsa* progressed from time to time

SECTION VIII ASOKA AS ADMINISTRATOR

Aims and Methods Asoka aimed at the material, moral and spiritual elevation of his subjects, civilised and semi civilised, and at the enthronement of the *Arthasastra* ideal of benevolent monarchy, assisted by capable and honest officials Pillar Edict I says "My Agents whether of high low or middle rank, themselves conform to my teaching and lead others in the right way—fickle people must be led in the right way—, likewise also the Wardens of the Marches (frontier officers)" In Pillar Edict IV the subject is continued "To my Governors (*Rajukas*) set over many hundred thousands of people I have granted independence in the award of honours and penalties in order that the Governors confidently and fearlessly may perform their duties, bestow welfare and happiness upon the people of the country They will ascertain the causes of happiness or unhappiness Just as a man, having made over his child to a skilful nurse, feels confident and says to himself 'the skilful nurse is eager to care for the happiness of my child' even so my Governors have been created for the welfare and happiness of the country,

with intent that fearlessly, confidently and quietly they may perform their duties." The Kalinga Edict I contains the instructions of Asoka to his officers dealing with the frontier tribes of the recently annexed kingdom who had not been brought under imperial administrative control: "All men are my children, and just as I desire for my children that they may enjoy every kind of prosperity and happiness in this world and in the next, so also I desire the same for all men.....You must make these people trust me and grasp the truth that 'the king is to us ev as a father; he loves us even as he loves himself; we a to the king even as his children '....By so doing you m win heaven and also discharge your debt to me." Tl second edict applies to the peaceful portion of Kalin and is addressed to the town officers: "Whatsover m views are, I desire them to be acted on in practice an carried into effect by certain means.....You have bee set over many thousands of living beings that you ma gain the affections of good men. 'All men are m children '.....You, however, do not grasp this truth t its full extent.....It happens that some individu incurs imprisonment or torture, and when the result is hi imprisonment without due cause, many other people ar deeply grieved. In such a case you must desire to d justice.....The root of the whole matter lies in pe severance and patience in applying this principle o government. The indolent man cannot rouse himself t move, yet one must needs move, advance, go on.....Il performance of this duty (to carry out the royal instruc tions) can never gain my regard, whereas in fulfilling m instructions you will gain heaven and also pay your deb to me." Thus stress is laid on governmental activity an guidance with a view to the promotion of popular welfare Public servants should be honest and energetic with a desire to do justice to the people so that reasonable and good men might be well disposed towards the government

Mechanism Only the most necessary changes were made by Asoka in the existing mechanism of government. The Suvarnagiri (near Maski) Viceroyalty must have been created by his father The annexation of Kalinga added the Viceroyalty of Tosali Therefore, on the whole, there were four provinces in Northern India and two in South India the home province, Taxila, Ujjain, Girnar, Tosali and Suvarnagiri The Pillar Edicts encircled the heart of the empire the Rock Edicts indicating the more distant parts of it Though the old rulers were continued in some regions subject to imperial control some tribes being in a state of semi independence, and local autonomy, urban and rural, conceded, centralisation of authority was substantial, regard being had to the vastness of the imperial territory The activity of the ministerial council is referred to in Rock Edict VI In order to give a fillip to Buddhist propaganda, new officers called *Dharmamahamatras* were appointed and we have seen the wide range of their activity Rock Edict III mentions official quinquennial transfers for promoting the cause of the *Dhamma* The Kalinga Edict II alludes to quinquennial and triennial transfers of officials " of mild and temperate disposition and regardful of the sanctity of life," in order to improve the administration of criminal justice Pillar Edict IV says " For as much as it is desirable that there should be uniformity in judicial procedure and uniformity in penalties, from this time forward my rule is this ' To condemned men lying in prison under sentence of death a respite of three days is granted by me ' (During that interval) the relatives in some cases will arrange for a revision in order to save their lives, or in order to obtain a revision will give alms with a view to the next world or will observe fasting For my desire is that even when their time is irrevocably fixed they (the condemned) may gain the next world while among the people various pious practices may increase, including self-control and libera-

lity." Further, Asoka continued the old practice of annual release of prisoners, probably on his birthday.

Personnel. For the best results Asoka relied on the personnel of government. His great example of unceasing activity as a moral duty reminds us of Harsha, Sher Shah and Aurangzib. We should not suppose he believed that legislation would do the whole task of moral transformation. The Minor Rock Edict I illustrates the high productivity of human energy. Rock Edict VI says: "In all places I attend to the affairs of the people. I never feel satisfaction in my exertions and dispatch of business. For work I must for the welfare of all the folk [the whole world]; and of that again, the root is energy and the dispatch of business." Hence Asoka's frequent instructions and exhortations to his officers in order to change the spirit of the administration. Kautilyan severity must have been modified substantially by the energy and humanity of the Buddhist Emperor, whose special ordinances were bound to increase the burden of imperial administration.

SECTION IX. THE SPLENDOUR OF ASOKA

Asoka's Character. Asoka was a man of noble purpose who incessantly laboured to realise it. His support to Buddhism was not tarnished by any personal or dynastic motive. His missionary labour in the Indian and Greek worlds is a bold idea though its fortunes everywhere were not the same. His other conception was equally novel, the publication of edicts to spread the *Dhamma* and give permanency to his teaching. That his edicts could not alone solve the problem of Buddhist expansion he himself knew. He relied more on the human agency at his disposal. His admirably sustained energy stimulated the activities of others. In short, he knew how to promote a great cause. That Buddhism did not supersede Brahmanism in India cannot be regarded as a measure of his failure, for he has expounded his con-

viction that one should adhere to one's own faith. From the point of view of his religious role, he has been compared with St. Paul, Constantine and Charlemagne. But " if a man's fame can be measured by the number of hearts who revere his memory, by the number of lips who have mentioned and still mention him with honour, Asoka is more famous than Charlemagne or Cæsar" (Koppen)*. The comparison of Asoka with St. Paul is more appropriate in so far as both made their respective religions great and universal; but, while Asoka made Buddhism simple, St. Paul made Christianity complex. The truer parallel to Asoka is found by some in Marcus Aurelius, but it is really difficult to compare him with others for the simple reason that he was unique. Kanishka, not Asoka, was the Constantine of Buddhism, because the former submitted to the growing influence of a great religion, whereas the latter made a small religion great, uninfluenced by considerations of personal profit. In spite of his piety and saintliness, the strength of Asoka as a monarch was never impaired. Even when he speaks about the glory of *Dhammavijaya,* he shows his determination not to be made the victim of his own ideal. He was not a dreamer, but a man of practical genius. If Alexander worked for the unity of mankind towards the close of his career, Asoka tried as far as possible to make man think of his duty to the dumb animals and labour in the cause of man and beast His teaching is so universal as to appeal to the cultured man of today. Though India ultimately rejected his religion, much of his gospel was incorporated in the wisdom of the country.

Ideals. There are very few examples in history of a self-imposed check on imperialism After the Kalinga war Asoka stood for non aggression, but would not give up his position as an imperialist. He would do everything to heal the wounds of Kalinga short of its liberation from

* *Encyclopaedia* Britannica (14th edition, 1929), II. p 546.

the imperial clutches. In administration he was wedded to the *mabap* (mother and father) theory of monarchy, democracy coming in by the back-door in the Kautilyan manner. Though he was the noblest exponent of religious toleration, he would insist upon a certain degree of conformity to the dictates of reason and conscience. He was a rationalist preaching practical ethics but with reference to the goal of heaven, and he would not mystify and confound by revelation or metaphysics. His social ideal was the unity of mankind under the sovereignty of the *Dhamma*, universal in its connotation and application, and the happiness of "man and beast." In other words, his central ideal was to promote *sarvalokahita* or welfare of the whole world as far as possible.

Achievements. As far as Asoka was concerned, he was true to his ideals, compromising with them only to suit the standard of his people. But, after his death, his rationalist social ideals did not flourish in a country where the caste system had become well established, if not cast-iron. His doctrines of *ahimsa* and toleration however effected a profound change in the Brahmanical outlook on life. But his ideal of peace and non-aggression found no enthusiasts later. He wanted his sons and grandsons to be strong and peaceful; he never stood for peace at any price.

Compared with Alexander and Caesar. A historian of the world thinks that Asoka was "the greatest of kings, far in advance of his age," surpassing Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar and other renowned leaders of mankind: "Amidst the tens of thousands of names of monarchs that crowd the columns of history, their majesties and graciousness and serenities and royal highnesses and the like, the name of Asoka shines, and shines almost alone, a star" (H. G. Wells). A historian of Asoka endorses that opinion.* An answer to the question

* D. R. Bhandarkar, *Asoka* (1925), p. 232.

of Asoka's true place in world history depends on our conception of a monarch's duties A great sovereign, in the days with which we are at present concerned, should have possessed, in brief, character, military ability and statesmanship If he were a saint and prophet, so much the better, but he should not have been deficient as a general, administrator or statesman. Asoka's character is almost perfect. A few scholars regard him as vain and boastful His sternest critic remarks that "had Asoka been greater than he was, he would not have attempted the impossible We should have had no edicts"* As regards his vanity, the charge is based on the old interpretation of a famous passage in the Minor Rock Edict I that Asoka claims to have dethroned the Brahmans from their position of *bhudevas* (gods on earth), but the generally accepted sense of the passage, as now understood, is that he made irreligious people religious by his exertions No doubt some of his statements are too sweeping to be accepted without modification His estimate of the success of his missions is an instance in point, besides his claim to have made curative arrangements for men and animals in the Tamil kingdoms and even in the dominions of Antiochos Theos and his neighbours Exaggerations apart, certain qualities appreciated in great men and prophets are not tolerated in ordinary mortals To speak of Asoka's megalomania is to deny him unfairly the privilege of prophets to the use of "Capital I" In spite of a few defects revealed by the scrutiny of critics, his personal and public character is above reproach But Alexander the Great was clean different, and the serious flaws in his character have already been noted As regards Caesar, he was a moral leper in his private life While he was on the wrong side of fifty years, he fell into the clutches of the Egyptian witch, Queen Cleopatra, by whom he had a son. His sexual aberrations deserve no

* T W Rhys Davids *Buddhist India* (1911), p 307

place in a decent chronicle. His patriotism was only enlarged selfishness. From the point of view of character, Asoka is incomparably superior to Alexander or Caesar. More people remember the name of Asoka today than that of Alexander or Caesar. Though Alexander's Empire broke up immediately after his death, he was a pioneer in cultural propaganda. His grand ideal of Perso-Macedonian unity, though unsuccessful, absorbed his energy for some time, and his methods of inter-marriage, military service and Greek education could not be regarded as wrong-headed. As a general, his claims to greatness are unsurpassed. But Asoka's position is entirely different; we have no adequate data to pronounce on his military ability in comparison with that of past-masters in the art of war. Caesar was a great general, a great statesman, a great orator, a great historian, etc., etc. Comparisons of dissimilar men are particularly difficult. Asoka had the vision of a statesman, and his social ideal, if successful, would have regenerated Indian life. In his field Asoka is unrivalled, and no comparisons are suitable. It is futile to compare him with Alexander and Caesar, from the point of view of their special abilities. But historians who are prophets may choose the point of human excellence worthy of their approbation and extol or condemn kings from their own point of view. A scientific historian however must take into consideration all aspects of human greatness. Those who have regarded Asoka as the king of kings have looked upon him chiefly in the light of his character and moral grandeur. He was great in many respects and unique in his special sphere, and any attempt to add to his greatness will make him incredibly perfect. His real place in human history is the place of honour as King-Prophet; without becoming a kill-joy, he stood for a transvaluation of values (not in the Nietzschean sense) appealing to the modern scientific mind.

SECTION X. THE LATER MAURYAS (*c* 232—*c* 188 B.C.)

Successors of Asoka. The interval of nearly half a century between Asoka and Pushyamitra Sunga is covered by the reigns of the ephemeral Mauryas whose genealogy, chronology and history are uncertain except where the strangely discordant indigenous accounts occasionally agree. Asoka's polygamous household (he married five wives—Devi, Asandhimitra, Karuvaki, Padmavati and Tishyarakshita) did not leave him in want of children or children's children, so much so that we are not certain whether he was succeeded by his son or grandson after a long reign following his two Viceroyalties. There are authorities mentioning his son Kunala and the latter's son Dasaratha, as the immediate successor of Asoka; in Kashmir, his son Jaluka is spoken of as his direct successor and in Gandhara, his great-grandson Virasena. Kunala who was blinded by the machinations of his dissolute step-mother, Tishyarakshita, owing to his rejection of her criminal advances, while he was Viceroy of Taxila under his father, is said to have reigned nominally for eight years with the assistance of his second son, Samprati Kunala's eldest son, Dasaratha, followed him on the imperial throne. His three inscriptions in the caves of the Nagarjuni hills, near Gaya, mention his name and also his title, "Devanampiya," and record his gift of three caves to the Ajivikas. He was succeeded by his brother, Samprati, the idol of the Jains, who is said to have constructed *viharas* "even in non-Aryan countries" His control over Pataliputra and Ujjain seems to have been intact. His successor was his son, Salisuka The last imperial Maurya was Brihadratha, whose position in the genealogical list is not clear. Bana mentions his open assassination by his Commander-in-Chief Pushyamitra, during a military parade, and describes him as *pratijnadurbala* or untrue to his word. The association of the later imperial Mauryas with more or less the central part of the empire

argues their loss of the distant provinces. The cis-Vindhyan fragment must have been overwhelmed by the uprising of Kalinga, Vidarbha and the Andhra country. Antiochos III did not invade India, but crossed the Hindu Kush about 206 B. C. to renew his friendly alliance with Subhagasena, the Maurya prince of Gandhara, and obtained from him a few elephants. Kashmir and Gandhara seem to have become independent soon after the death of Asoka. The invasion of India by Demetrios must have taken place after the Sunga revolution about 188 B.C.; Dr. Tarn* gives 184—167 B.C. for his Indian career and regards Apollodotos, his relative, and Menander, his general, as his coadjutors; "it was the ultimate break-down of the Maurya empire which gave Demetrius his opportunity."† Therefore the successors of Asoka were not confronted with foreign invasion.

Causes of Imperial Decline: Political and Administrative. The Maurya Empire down to the death of Asoka was a *tour de force* requiring explanation rather than its decline and collapse. The triumph of centripetal forces was exceptional, whereas the operation of centrifugal tendencies was natural on a sub-continent. The will and energy of masterful men, seconded by exceptionally capable ministers, created an extensive empire controlled by a complex administrative machinery. Hereditary succession could not produce a long line of able monarchs, though supplemented by the education of princes on the lines prescribed in the *Arthasastra*. Generally the father's grand success would be prejudicial to the development of the latent powers, if any, of the son; Bindusara and Asoka were exceptions to the rule. Our conception of monarchy in name was alien to ancient India. Moreover, in those times distances was a reality, of which it is difficult to gain a vivid conception in this

* Tarn, *op. cit.*, pp. 133 and 140.
† *Ibid.*, p. 130.

"flying age." Though there was some decentralisation in the Maurya Empire, centralisation was the fundamental principle of its organisation. The successors of Asoka beginning with the blind man could not function as monarchs in the Kautilyan scheme of things. The crowd of princes and princesses and dominating beldames must have made the polygamous royal household an arena for intrigue and strife. The weakness at the centre would react on the provinces, where disruptive forces would resume their normal sovereignty. The supposition that the imperial weaklings were spoiled by Buddhist pacifism cannot stand, because Asoka, as revealed in the edicts, emphasised this world and the next, and remained a strong and healthy man. In his mood of repentance after the Kalinga war, he never contemplated the rendition of his conquest, nor does he seem to have slackened imperial control. Further, some of his successors were not Buddhists; Samprati was a Jain and Jaluka was a Saiva. But even in the days of Asoka, there were administrative difficulties, and we have noted the troubles consequent on the imperfect execution of his decrees by his officers, pictured in the Kalinga Edict II. Literary evidence adverts to disaffection at Taxila under Bindusara and Asoka, easily removed by the crown prince. All this shows the arduousness of controlling the distant provinces from Pataliputra, but can never be the foundation of a theory of official oppression compassing the ruin of the Maurya Empire as a whole. Therefore the fundamental cause of imperial decline was the incapacity of the successors of Asoka, divided and quarrelling among themselves, to operate efficiently the huge and complex administrative machine, and the consequent spur offered to provincial ambition and inherent separatist tendencies.

Religious. The question is discussed whether the overthrow of the Mauryas was not due to the Brahmanical reaction promoted by Asoka's pro-Buddhist and anti-Brahmanical policy. Rejecting extreme views, we may

grant some hostility to his policy, which however was not anti-Brahmanical. What happened to the discontented *coterie* after Asoka's death we do not know. It could not have grown in strength because the successors of Asoka patronised different religions, and even his Buddhist successors could not have systematically pursued his policy. The fact is that Pushyamitra, probably a Brahman, followed a definitely Brahmanical course of action, and is said to have persecuted Buddhism. Therefore the religious factor cannot be dismissed altogether, nor should his militarism be regarded as Brahmanical. The fact of the matter seems to be that a palace revolution was effected by the Commander-in-Chief of the last imperial Maurya for reasons best known to the former, who subsequently usurped the throne, espoused the cause of Brahmanism, and pursued a military career. That Pushyamitra was the Maurya Commander-in-Chief who murdered his sovereign in broad daylight proves the unpopularity and political weakness of Brihadratha, but not his pro-Buddhist policy or the emasculation of the people by an over-dose of Buddhist pacifism administered to them by Asoka. To sum up, the fall of the Maurya Empire was due to internal causes, chiefly political and administrative, not to foreign invasion. The weakness of Asoka's successors stimulated the natural desire of the distant provinces to be independent. The Brahmanical reaction must, to a slight extent, have taken advantage of the ineptitnde of the central authority. Though Pushyamitra's motives are not clear, he posed as the champion of Brahmanism after his usurpation of the Maurya throne.

SECTION XI. RELIGION

Heterodox Religions and the Bhakti Cult. We have followed the progress of Buddhism under Asoka and his successors. The other heterodox religion, Jainism, made greater progress than Buddhism before Asoka. The story of Chandragupta's southern move shows the spread of Jainism in South India. About 300 B.C. differences of

opinion on the question of nudity *vs.* dress divided the Jains into Digambaras (sky-clad or naked) and Svetambaras (white-clad). The latter held a council at Pataliputra without the co-operation of the others and agreed upon the Canon, which was rejected by the other sect. This dual division of the Jains took final shape in the first century A.D. In spite of their patronage by Asoka and Samprati, their position in Magadha was slowly undermined, their influence gradually spreading to Ujjain in the third century B. C. The Ajivikas continued to flourish during that century, thanks to the benevolence of Asoka and Dasaratha. The cults of Siva and Vishnu (Dionysos and Herakles, according to the Greeks) were becoming increasingly popular in the mountainous parts and Mathura respectively. The name of Skanda appeared along with that of Siva.

SECTION XII. ECONOMIC CONDITION

Villages and Towns. Villages were classified in many ways so as to give an idea of their resources Though village autonomy prevailed and much co-operative work was done by the villagers for their common good, the existence of a Superintendent of Cows is indicative of the interest taken by the central government in rural welfare. Town were innumerable; the more important among them were fortified; the streets were supplied with drains; precautions against fire were taken; and sanitary regulations were enforced.

Agriculture. Besides numerous grains, the cultivation of sugarcane was facilitated by the government's attention to irrigation. Megasthenes notes that the agriculturists were "laborious, intelligent, frugal and honest" and untroubled by war. There was a Superintendent of Forests to develop their resources.

Industry. The principal industries were mining, weaving, manufacture of liquor and ship-building The art of the carpenter and of the stone-cutter was well

developed; the latter is best illustrated by Maurya sculpture. The other industries were shoe-making, dyeing, pottery, fishing, manufacture of flour and sugar, and extraction of oil. The guild organisation was in a flourishing condition. The artisan was specially protected by the government. Slavery existed. Kautilya's regulations regarding the proper treatment of slaves and labourers are detailed.

Trade and Currency. The Superintendent of Ships was empowered to levy port-taxes and administer the harbour regulations. The attention given to this subject in the *Arthasastra* and Asoka's references to Western kingdoms are proof positive of the commercial relations of India with foreign countries. Internal trade was promoted by rivers, canals and roads. A great trunk-road connected Pataliputra with Taxila and the Indus Valley. The facilities for travellers provided by Asoka on the roads were by no means his innovations. The trade with South India was active, and Kautilya prefers this trade in diamonds, pearls, gold and conch shells to that with the Himalayan countries in blankets, skins and horses. There was strict government control of trade, internal and foreign. The trade guilds were prosperous and enjoyed many privileges. The *Arthasastra* mentions gold, silver and copper coins and the *adesa* or bill of exchange. The legal rate of interest was fifteen per cent per annum.

Comforts and Luxuries. The absence of famines alluded to by Megasthenes is contradicted by the Jain tradition of a twelve-year famine and by the government's famine policy detailed in the *Arthasastra*. He speaks of the simplicity and sobriety of the people, who loved fine clothes and gold ornaments. The high material civilization of the age and the greatness of the empire gave much scope for luxurious living. On the whole, life was cheerful with the comforts of life well provided and with popular entertainments arranged by the emperor and the

industrial and commercial magnates The case of the indigent was attended to by the government It is profoundly significant that Kautilya says "Wealth alone is important inasmuch as charity and desire depend upon wealth for their realisation The root of wealth is activity"

SECTION XIII SOCIAL LIFE

Caste The caste system became complex, the multiplicity of sub-castes was due to intercaste marriages and the growth of professional life Though the Brahmans functioned as priests and though the *Purohita* a great officer of the king, was a Brahman their profession as priests was not the same as in the Vedic age Their chief business was to live in forest *asramas,* acquire spiritual knowledge, and impart it to their pupils Their advice was sought after by kings in important matters They enjoyed some privileges, they were not taxed and their property was not to be taken away in any circumstances, they were not to be sentenced to death or awarded corporal punishment, in extreme cases they might be branded or exiled As they lived on public charity, their position was adversely affected through the impetus given to *sannyasa* or renunciation of the world by Buddhism and Jainism Therefore the *Arthasastra* prohibits *sannyasa* in the case of those who have made no provision for their wives and children The rise of Sudra dynasties like the Nandas and the Mauryas gave a blow to the old conception of Kshatriya sovereignty and the teaching of Asoka popular and universal could not but affect the old social system though he bracketed Brahmans with ascetics and patronised them

Women Kinds of Marriage The *Arthasastra* is more liberal to women than the *Dharma Sutras* and tempers their rigidity and puritanism. Eight forms of marriage are mentioned in it as in them but it allows greater freedom to individuals *Brahma*—gift of a girl with jewels,

Prajapatya—marriage for the performance of sacred duties by man and woman; *Arsha*—exchange of a girl for a couple of cows; *Daiva*—marriage with a sacrificing priest; *Gandharva*—love marriage; *Asura*—mercenary marriage; *Rakshasa*—marriage after kidnapping; and *Paisacha*—abduction of a girl in sleep and in a state of inebriation. The distinction between the first two forms of marriage is not clarified by the Sastrakaras.* The first four kinds are old, and become valid with the father's consent, and the others with the approval of father and mother. But the validity of a marriage generally depends on the agreement of the parties concerned. So says the wise Kautilya.

Divorce and Remarriage. A woman may be divorced on account of her *infertility* or for not giving birth to sons; "women are created for the sake of sons." The husband may be divorced by the wife for his long absence from her, if he becomes a seditionist, if he is likely to imperil her life, if he has lost caste, or if he becomes impotent. Separation on account of mutual hatred may be effected with the consent of both. Three grounds for remarriage of women are approved: long absence of husbands abroad; their taking to *sannyasa;* and their death; in these cases, remarriage is with the husband's brother. If a woman is not maintained by her husband's relatives during his absence, she may remarry anybody she likes. Widows remarrying persons against the wishes of their fathers-in-law should return to them any gifts received from them and from their own deceased husbands.† Cruelty of husbands to wives and of wives to husbands is punishable. There are sections in the *Arthasastra* dealing with maintenance of women, their elopement, vagrancy, etc. Megasthenes refers to polygamy and "purchase of wives for a pair of oxen" (obviously the *Arsha* form of marriage mentioned above). The

* Altekar, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-55.
† Mookerji, *Chandragupta Maurya and His Times*, pp. 261-65.

custom of *sati* is mentioned by Greek writers, who explain it as the outcome of the poisoning of husbands prevalent once upon a time!

Prostitution. The Superintendent of *ganikas* or prostitutes paid, taxed and protected them, and in general looked after their welfare. Offences against them were defined and punished, and their good behaviour was brought under state control. Their education in the relevant arts (music, vocal and instrumental, dancing, acting, painting, reading, writing, making of scents and garlands, massage, etc.) was entrusted to teachers paid by the state. The king, his court and the public patronised beautiful and accomplished prostitutes, some of whom were employed as spies. When they became old and unattractive, they were transferred to the royal kitchen or appointed as nurses Their sons were trained for the profession of actors. We do not know whether *ganikas* were medically examined by the state.

SECTION XIV. CULTURE.

Writing and Language. Kautilya's chapter on royal writs, which is decisive proof of the advance of writing, mentions the room for keeping the state records Government accounts and documents were extensive The inscriptions of Asoka afford further evidence of the inaccuracy of the statement of Megasthenes that there were no written laws and that Indians were ignorant of writing. Sanskrit was confined to Brahmanical religious and profane literature, whereas the Prakrits were used for administrative and social purposes The Jains and the Buddhists employed the language of the people for religious propaganda, and their Canon is in Prakrit or its literary form Pali. The Edicts of Asoka gave an impetus to the progress of the vernaculars.

Literature. The *Arthasastra* of Kautilya, a unique work in Sanskrit Literature, is the greatest production

in the field of *Dandaniti*, summarising and superseding the previous works on the subject. It is in the best *Sutra* style, provided with a *Bhashya* or commentary by the author himself. The later *Dharma Sutras* were composed during this period. Later literary tradition makes Subandhu (different from the author of the famous romance, *Vasavadatta*) a minister of Bindusara, and credits him with the composition of a Sanskrit drama. Portions of the Jain Scripture and the bulk of the Buddhist Canon came into existence in the reigns of Chandragupta and Asoka respectively; the Pali *Kathavatthu* deserves special mention. The sermons of Asoka are as much literature as the *Upanishads*.

Education. The University of Taxila must have gained from the establishment of the Maurya Empire. Kautilya mentions the sciences as four (in contradistinction to the school of Usanas holding that the science of government is the only science): *Anvikshaki* or Philosophy, the three *Vedas*, *Varta* and *Dandaniti*. He outlines the education of princes as follows: the alphabet and arithmetic immediately after the first tonsure; and after *upanayana*, the *Vedas*, philosophy, economics and politics. To this curriculum are added the military art and *Itihasa*, the latter consisting of *Purana*, *Itivritta* (history), *Akhyayika* (story), *Udaharana* (illustration), *Dharmasastra* and *Arthasastra* (only a part of it coming under *Itihasa*). Thus Kautilya prescribes a comprehensive course of studies, religious and secular, and makes philosophy, including Sankhya, the leading science. Jainism and Buddhism contributed much to popular education, and the publication of Asoka's edicts in the language of the masses must have tended in the same direction.

Philosophy. Dr. Jacobi places Jaimini, the author of the *Mimamsa Sutras*, in the third century B. C. on the ground that he must have lived after Panini and before Patanjali. Jaimini was the contemporary of Badarayana, who composed the *Brahma (Vedanta) Sutras*, commented

on by Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhva. These two *Sutras* attempt to systematise the Vedic religion. But some scholars assign them to an earlier age, the fourth century B. C, though the general tendency of specialists is to regard them as compositions of out next period. Kautilya attaches supreme value to Philosophy and observes: "*Anvikshaki* is most beneficial to the world, keeps the mind steady and firm in weal and woe alike, and bestows excellence of foresight, speech and action Light to all kinds of knowledge." According to Megasthenes, the Brahmans prohibited Philosophy to their women The spread of Jainism must have contributed to the development of Vaiseshika thought, though the *Sutras* of this philosophical system were framed in a subsequent age.

Art. The identification of the Parkham and Patna statues with those of Saisunaga kings, if proved by further research, must modify our ideas of the origin of Indian art. Art work which was mostly in wood before Asoka has completely perished, and we know the artistic excellence of the reign of Chandragupta only from Greek literary evidence and inferentially from the perfection achieved by sculpture in the period of Asoka Excavations at Pataliputra have brought to light the remains of a hall with many pillars, revealing Iranian influence. Of Asoka's numerous monuments only a few are extant. His palace and monasteries and most of his *stupas* (dome-like structures of brick or stone chiefly to house the relics of the Buddha or some other saint) have disappeared. The only remaining *stupas* are at Sanchi (Central India).

Origin of Buddhist Art. Though Buddhist art expresses the profound tranquillity, compassion and other characteristics of the Buddha, it was the legend of his life which truly inspired that art. Its origin is found in the *Mahaparinibbanasutta*, which records that the Master on the eve of his death asked his disciples to bury his

remains under a *stupa*. Buddhist art generally delights in depicting his birth, his departure from Kapilavastu, his struggle with Mara, his first sermon, his encounter with the elephant Nalagiri, his *parinibbana*, and his previous births as described in the *Jatakas*. Most of these features are illustrated only in post-Asokan art.

Pillars. Asoka's lats or pillars are made of fine single blocks of sandstone (hence called monoliths), quarried near Chunar, so well polished as to appear like metallic columns, and forty to fifty feet in height. The ten of them on which inscriptions are found are at Delhi (originally at Topra, Panjab, and another at Meerut, U. P.), Allahabad, Lauriya Araraj, Lauriya Nandangarh, Rampurwa (these three in Bihar), Sanchi, Sarnath (near Benares), Rummindei and Nigliva (both in the Nepalese Tarai). Their capitals or tops are crowned with figures of animals like the lion, elephant and bull. The Sarnath capital with four lions "is the product of the most developed art of which the world was cognisant in the third century B.C.—the handiwork of one who had generations of artistic effort and experience behind him" (Sir John Marshall).* It once supported the *dhammachakka*, and the abacus depicts four animals: elephant, bull, horse and lion, indicative of the spread of the *Dhamma* in all the four directions. The Sanchi lion capital is not much inferior to that of Sarnath. This achievement marks the height of Indian sculptural progress.

Caves and Minor Arts. The caves of intractable gneiss presented to the Ajivikas by Asoka and Dasaratha are products of infinite patience and great skill, with their inside "burnished like mirrors." Though the punch-marked coins possess no artistic merit, the work of jewellers and lapidaries or gem-engravers exhibits high technical skill. The Rock Inscriptions (14 plus two

* *CHI.*, I, p. 620.

Kalinga Edicts and two Minor Rock Edicts) are found at Shahbazgarhi and Mansehra (Peshawar and Hazara Districts, N. W. F. P.); Kalsi (Dehra Dun District, U.P.); Bairat (Jaipur State, Rajputana)—No. 1 is the Minor Rock Edict and No. 2, on a detached piece of rock, now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta; Sahasram or Sasaram (Shahabad District, Bihar); Rupnath (Jubbalpore District, C. P.); Junagarh or Girnar (Kathiawar), Sopara (Thana District, Bombay); Maski and Kopbal (the Nizam's State); Yerragudi (Kurnool District, Madras); Siddapura, Jatinga-Rameswara and Brahmagiri (Chitaldrug District, Mysore); Dhauli (Puri District, Orissa); and Jaugada (formerly in Ganjam District, Madras, but now in Orissa). Though they are of inferior artistic value to the pillars, the letters, cut carefully, are beautiful.

Character of Maurya Art. Sir John Marshall praises "the dignified, massive simplicity, extraordinary precision and accuracy and spirited realism" of Maurya art. Dr. Smith observes: "The skill of the stone-cutter may be said to have attained perfection and to have accomplished tasks which would perhaps be found beyond the powers of the 20th century."* The pillars had to be taken far away from the quarry, and "their fabrication, conveyance and erection bear eloquent testimony to the skill and resource of the stone-cutters and engineers of the Maurya age."†

Foreign Influence: Greek and Iranian. Sir John Marshall emphasises the striking contrast between the Sarnath capital and the Parkham statue, regards them as "the alpha and the omega of early Indian art,"‡ and discerns in the former indubitable Iranian and Greek (Bactrian) influences. The Iranian features are the bell-

* Smith, *Asoka*, p 136.
† *Ibid.*, pp. 120 21.
‡ *C.H.I.*, I, p 622.

necessary resources and utilised them for a great cause. The great improvement in the material condition of the people in general must have made their outlook on life one of robust optimism. India's intercourse with Western Asia made the adaptation of foreign ideas possible. Above all, the living faith of Asoka is to be regarded as the basic contributory factor to the cultural eminence attained in the third century B.C., and his moral earnestness did not verge on puritanism.

SECTION XV. SOUTH INDIA

The Arthasastra and the Indika. The *Arthasastra* gives the place of honour among pearls to *Tamraparnika* and *Pandyakavataka* and mentions the cotton fabrics of Madura—clear references to the Pandya country and its valuable products. Among other southern regions referred to are Mahishmati, Aparanta and Kalinga. Megasthenes narrates legends about the Pandya country and its queen, describes its army of 500 elephants, 4,000 horse and 130,000 foot, and alludes to its pearl-fishery. We have considered the Mauryan invasion of South India referred to in the Sangam Literature.

Asoka's Edicts. The inscriptions of Asoka throw light on political conditions and, coupled with the Ceylonese Chronicles, acquaint us with his Buddhist propaganda in cis-Vindhyan India. The conquest and administration of Kalinga and the southernmost limit of the Maurya Empire have been dealt with. As regards independent South India, Rock Edict II mentions the Cholas, the Pandyas, the Satiyaputra and the Keralaputra as far as "Tamraparni", as neighbouring powers obtaining the advantage of Asoka's "healing arrangements" for men and animals. Rock Edict XIII refers to the spread of the *Dhamma* among the Cholas and the Pandyas as far as "Tamraparni." The greatest difficulty in interpretation relates to the Satiyaputra country. Numerous identifications of this region have been proposed; the

region of Kanchi, the territory corresponding to the Coimbatore District, in which there is Satyamangalam North Malabar, and South Kanara It is best to take it as the region between Kerala (Travancore, Cochin and Malabar) and the Chola and Pandya countries, *viz*, the Kongudesa—the Coimbatore and Salem Districts "Tam raparni or Tambrapanni" is identified with the region watered by that river, but that region must have been included in the Pandya country Therefore it is better to regard it as the equivalent of Taprobane, the Greek name of Ceylon The political fortunes of the Tamil kingdoms are unknown till they came into prominence in the early centuries of the Christian era The famous Tamil grammatical work, the *Tolkappiyam*, may be assigned to the period under survey, it is said to exhibit the influence of *Aindra Vyakarana* (Indra's grammar), a pre Paninian system of Sanskrit grammar, but it is free from Buddhist influence

Earliest Tamil Inscriptions Caves popularly known as *panchapandavamalai* with Tamil* inscriptions in Brahmi script are found at Kalugumalai and many other places in the Madura and Tinnevelly Districts, their popular name reminds us of the Pandavapabbata associated with the Buddha's name, Kalugumalai is Tamil for Gridhra kuta, or the Vulture Peak intimately connected with his career On scriptal grounds the inscriptions may be assigned to the latter half of the third century B C Therefore the earliest monuments of the Tamil country confirm its reception of Buddhism, mentioned in R E XIII and the *Mahavamsa*

Andhradesa and Maharashtra R E XIII refers to the Buddhistisation of the Andhradesa, and the *Katha*

* *Proceedings and Transactions of the Third Oriental Conference* (1925), pp 275-300 *contra New Indian Antiquary* I, pp 362 76

vatthu mentions the Andhakas. The importance of Buddhism there is proved by the inscriptions of the third century B.C. at Bhattiprolu (Guntur Dt.), where the relics of the Buddha are placed in crystal caskets enclosed in stone caskets. R. E. V says that *Dharmamahamatras* were employed in Aparanta and among the Rashtrikas and the Pitinikas. R. E. XIII refers to Asoka's *Dhamma vijaya* among the Pitinikas. The earliest Buddhist monuments of Maharashtra, belonging to the third century B.C., are found at Kolhapur and other places, besides the Rock Edicts at Sopara.

CHAPTER V

SECOND CENTURY B.C. TO THIRD CENTURY A.D.

SECTION I. THE SUNGAS AND THE KANVAS

Date. According to the *Puranas* the Mauryas ruled for one hundred and thirty-seven years and therefore their overthrow by Pushyamitra must have happened in 325—137 = 188 B.C. His reign-period being thirty-six years, his final date is 188—36 = 152 B.C. Including him there were ten Sungas reigning for one hundred and twelve years, and therefore the dynasty must have come to an end in 188—112 = 76 B.C. The Kanvas, who followed the Sungas, ruled for forty-five years and consequently till 76—45 = 31 B.C.

Pushyamitra Sunga (*c* 188—*c* 152 B.C.). The treacherous murder of Brihadratha Maurya was a ministerial revolution with the support of the army. Bana stigmatises Pushyamitra as an *anarya* (ignoble person), but refers to the murdered sovereign's failure to keep his promise. The *Puranas* allude to the Commander-in-Chief's extirpation of Brihadratha. Sunga is the tribal name and Baimbika, the family name, of Pushyamitra, who is regarded as a priestly Brahman, though normally the

elevation of a Brahman to the position of imperial general is improbable in the second century B.C., and the *Puranas* do not support that assumption. Much scholarly speculation centres round his alleged Brahmanhood. The Sungas were intimately connected with Vidisa (near Ujjain), which was probably their ancestral home.

Conquest of Berar. Kalidasa's *Malavikagnimitra* throws some light on the first three Sungas. Agnimitra, his father Pushyamitra's Viceroy of Vidisa, owing to his misunderstandings with Yajnasena of Vidarbha, invaded the latter territory, ousted its ruler from the throne, and partitioned it between two claimants, who became subordinate to the Sungas. The drama alludes also to the victory of Vasumitra, Agnimitra's son, over the Greeks, on the banks of the Sindhu, preparatory to the performance of the *asvamedha* by Pushyamitra mentioned by the grammarian Patanjali. The Ayodhya Sanskrit inscription of Dhanadeva, the sixth son of Pushyamitra, describes the latter as "the performer of two horse-sacrifices." We do not know whether Patanjali's reference is to the first or second *asvamedha*.

Defeated by Kharavela. The Hathigumpha inscription of Kharavela of Kalinga mentions, with reference to his eighth regnal year, his sack of Gorathagiri and his attack on Rajagriha and the consequent withdrawal of the Yavana king Dimita or Demetrios to Mathura; in his tenth regnal year he invaded Bharatavarsha; and in his twelfth year, he again invaded Magadha, stabled his elephants in the Sugangiya palace, subdued Bahasatimitra, king of Magadha, and returned home with a Jain image, which had been taken away by a Nanda king, and other spoils of war. As regards these epigraphical data, the chief point to be elucidated is the identity of Bahasati-(Brihaspati) mitra. Dr. K. P. Jayaswal identifies him with Pushyamitra Sunga on inscriptional and numismatic evidences, and suggests the equation of Brihaspati with Pushya as the former is the lord of the Pushya *nakshatra*.

To oppose this identification on the ground that Kharavela's adversary is referred to as the king of Magadha and associated with Rajagriha is to overlook the reference to the seizure of the Sugangiya palace at Pataliputra and to attach too much importance to archaic allusions. In Kalidasa's drama Pushyamitra remains a *Senapati* throughout his career, and this is no refutation of his position as emperor. The safety of Rajagriha might have led to his residence there in troublous times. Therefore Kharavela's activities in Northern India against Pushyamitra may be well founded. The latter's defeat probably happened during the period of the occupation of Pataliputra by the Greeks (175—168 B.C.). His second *asvamedha* may be dated after the Greek evacuation of the imperial city about 168 B.C.

Conflict with the Greeks. The progress of the Bactrian Greeks as far as Pataliputra is sufficiently attested, though there is a difference of opinion regarding the Greek foeman of Pushyamitra—Demetrios or Menander. Dr. Tarn, in the light of Greek evidence, attributes the conquest of India to Demetrios and his two lieutenants, Apollodotos and Menander. After seizing Taxila, Demetrios left Menander there in order to lead the south-eastern march, conquered Sindh, entrusted the southern advance to Apollodotos, and returned to Taxila. It was Menander who captured Sag(k)ala (Sialkot), Mathura, Saketa (in Oudh) and ultimately Pataliputra, with the result that Pushyamitra's probable advance as far as Sagala must have been nullified. But the *Yugapurana* of the *Gargi Samhita* says: "The *Yavanas* furious in battle will not stay in the Middle Country; there will be without doubt mutual conflicts; out of their own circles will arise an awful and supremely lamentable strife."* This is confirmed by Greek sources, according to which the evacuation of Pataliputra was due to the troubles

* Tarn, *op. cit.*, p. 454.

created by Eukratides. Menander acted under the instructions of his master, Demetrios. Probably the Greek withdrawal about 168 B.C., was partly caused by the foreigners' difficulties in holding Pataliputra against hostile Indian powers and by the intervention of Kharavela in Northern Indian politics Pushyamitra recovered a part of his lost ground as far as and including Oudh, and must have regained his capital. Most probably Kalidasa's reference is to the second horse-sacrifice, as Pushyamitra must have been sufficiently old to have a grandson fit to lead the sacrificial horse.

Alleged Persecution of Buddhism. The tradition of the Buddhists represents Pushyamitra as a violent persecutor of their religion who destroyed numerous monasteries, killed many monks, and went so far as to set a price on the head of every monk. The *Arya-Manjusri-Mulakalpa* calls him "Gomi-shanda" (gomi = bull) and "the wicked," and finds a place for him in hell. That he espoused the cause of Brahmanism is clear from his horse-sacrifices. It cannot be shown that he patronised Buddhism to any extent There is no decisive evidence either that he aimed at uprooting Buddhism, though he overthrew the Mauryas and pursued a stormy career. Still it is unhistorical to regard the story of his misdeeds as a figment of the Buddhist imagination.

Extent of the Empire. Pushyamitra held the central region of the Maurya Empire as far as the Narmada and a little further south (Vidarbha). If his authority had extended to the Panjab, he could not have held himself there for long against the Greek advance. We do not know whether he was an exact contemporary of Patanjali, though the latter is generally assigned to about 150 B C.

Agnimitra and his Successors. We have indicated the part Agnimitra played as his father's Viceroy. The next important ruler Bhaga, the ninth Sunga, reigned for thirty-two years, according to the *Puranas*. His four-

teenth regnal year has become famous for the erection of a Garuda monolith at Besnagar (Gwalior State) dedicated to "Vasudeva, the god of gods, by Heliodoros, a worshipper of Vishnu, the son of Dion and an inhabitant of Taxila who came as Greek ambassador from the Great King Antialkidas to King Kasiputra Bhagabhadra, the Saviour," with these details inscribed on it. The inscription concludes that "three immortal precepts when practised lead to heaven—self-restraint, charity and conscientiousness." This record proves the friendly relations between the Sungas and the Indo-Greek ruler mentioned, the conversion of a Greek ambassador to Vaishnavism, and his acquaintance with the *Mahabharata*, from which the concluding portion of the inscription is a quotation. A few scholars identify the Bhagabhadra of this record with Odraka or Bhadraka, the fifth Sunga. The last Sunga was Devabhuti, a reprobate, who was murdered by his Brahman minister, **Vasudeva Kanva.** There must have been obscure princes of the dynasty after Devabhuti, as the *Puranas* speak of the destruction of the Kanvas and the remains of the Sunga power by the Andhras.

Importance of the Sunga Period. The Sungas played a part not only in compassing the ruin of the Maurya dynasty, but also, to some extent, in defending the Gangetic Valley from the encroachments of the Bactrian Greeks, and subsequently entering into peaceful relations with them. They identified themselves with Brahmanism, revived the Vedic religion and the horse-sacrifice, and promoted the growth of Vaishnavism. Their contribution to art will be mentioned in the general survey of the age. Some scholars surmise that a few great works in Sanskrit must have been composed in the Sunga-Kanva period, which is consequently regarded by them as a literary epoch as well, in short a brilliant anticipation of the golden age of the Guptas. It must be said however that the Sunga revolution, on the whole, was much less constructive than the Maurya revolution.

Kanvas The Kanvas were a Brahman dynasty called *Sunga bhritya*, according to the *Puranas*, the four members of which ruled over a part of the Sunga dominions for forty five years The first king was the usurper Vasudeva, and the last, Susarman, was ousted by the Andhras. The history of Magadha after the fall of the Kanvas is largely a blank until the emergence of the Gupta power

SECTION II KHARAVELA OF KALINGA

Date (*c* 176—*c* 163 B C) On the assumption that the Hathigumpha inscription is dated in the year 165 of the Maurya era, it may be assigned to 325—165 = 160 B C, and Kharavela's accession to 160 + 13 (the reign-period taken into account in the record) = 173 B C But in the revised reading of that inscription no such chronological datum is found In his eighth regnal year Kharavela invaded Northern India, and Demetrios withdrew to Mathura On the ground that the date of the Greek abandonment of Pataliputra is 175 B C, Kharavela's eighth regnal year is equated with that date and therefore he must have ascended the throne in 175 + 8 = 183 B C But Dr Tarn gives 168 B C as the most satisfactory date for the Greek evacuation of Pataliputra,* and we may place Kharavela's succession in 168 + 8 = 176 B C and his birth in 176 + 24 (his age at coronation) = 200 B C We have however no data to determine his final date, though it is certain that he ruled for at least thirteen years Dr Buhler assigns the inscription, on palaeographical grounds to about 160 B C

The Hathigumpha Inscription The Hathigumpha (the Elephant Cave) inscription is found at Udayagiri, near Cuttack Time has been unkind to it and so the readings in some cases cannot be regarded as final The record describes year by year the activities of Kharavela warlike and peaceful during the first thirteen years of his

* *Ibid* p 133

reign. It is a historical document of unique value, throwing full light on the ascendancy of Kalinga in the first half of the second century B.C. Like the Allahabad Pillar inscription of Samudragupta, it is practically the only source of our knowledge of a great hero. It is the only Indian record of a king's doings in the order of chronology and of the knowledge acquired by him before his accession.* It has been rightly called "the chiselled history" of Kharavela. It is in Prakrit, written in the Brahmi script.

Contents. The prefatory portion mentions Kharavela's ancestor Mahameghavahana of the Cheta dynasty. During the period of his heir-apparentcy from fifteen to twenty-four years, Kharavela studied correspondence, currency, finance and law, secular and religious. In his twenty-fifth year he became king, and in his (1) first regnal year, he made extensive and costly improvements to the capital which pleased his subjects. (2) He marched westwards and threatened the Mushikas, thus disregarding Satakarni. (3) He gave entertainments of various kinds to the citizens. (4) He conquered the Rashtrikas and the Bhojakas (Western India). (5) He extended to the capital a canal excavated in the year 103 of King Nanda. (6 & 7) He performed the *Rajasuya*, remitted taxes, announced privileges to urban and rural corporations, and became a father. (8) He sacked Gorathagiri (Gaya District), attacked Rajagriha, and caused the retirement of Demetrios to Mathura. (9) He distributed charity and built a palace called Mahavijaya or Great Victory. (10) He raided Northern India. (11) He destroyed a market-town of the Ava king, and dismembered the powerful Tamil confederacy, which had been in existence for one hundred and thirteen years. (12) He humbled Brihaspatimitra, took back the image of Kalinga Jina that had been carried away by King Nanda, obtained rich

* R. D. Banerji, *History of Orissa* (1930), I, pp. 71 and 73.

booty from Anga and Magadha, and received many costly presents from the Pandya king. (13) He made donations to Jain monks and realised the distinction between body and soul. He summoned an assembly of ascetics from all places, erected four pillars inlaid with beryl, and caused the seven-fold *Angas* (Jain Canon) to be compiled. The record concludes with a number of Kharavela's titles: the King of Peace, the King of Prosperity, the King of Monks, the King of Dharma, the Respecter of every Sect, the Repairer of all Temples, the Great Conqueror, etc. This is in marked contrast with the admirable modesty of Asoka.

Historical Value. This lengthy epigraph enlightens us on the parentage and education, the wars, the public works, the religion and religious policy, the government and the personal character of Kharavela, though it tells us nothing about the territory annexed by him. He seems to have played the role of a knight-errant. In spite of his frequent wars, he calls himself "King of Peace." We do not know if he came into conflict with the Satavahanas directly. Some scholars are inclined to be critical about his alleged victories, especially over Pushyamitra. But, placed between two fires, Kharavela and Menander, Pushyamitra must have found his position difficult to maintain. Until and unless contradictory evidence is available, we have to take Kharavela's words at their face value. Like Asoka, Kharavela says that he respects every sect. He patronised Jainism, but did not forget the other religions. His love of Jainism did not make him a Puritan; he was a great builder and a man of well-balanced tastes; in short, an accomplished prince, rapid in his military movements, generous, popular and persevering. Besides reflecting contemporary affairs, the Hathigumpha inscription throws sidelights on the Nandas and the Tamil league. The recovery of Kharavela's history is a triumph of patient and laborious epigraphical scholarship.

SECTION III. THE GREEK CONQUEST

Independence of Bactria. Parthia revolted against the Seleucids, and the Arsakidan dynasty, established in 249-8 B.C., continued till its overthrow in A.D. 226-7 by the Sassanian line. Dr. Tarn rejects the story of Bactrian revolt in 250 B.C. Diodotos I married the sister of Seleukos II about 246 B.C., and continued in a subordinate capacity till his death about 230 B.C. Diodotos II followed an anti-Seleucid policy, but was murdered by Euthydemos I, who had married a Seleucid princess and who clashed with Antiochos III in 208 B.C., concluded an alliance with him in 206 B.C., ensuring his own independence, and expanded his kingdom up to his death about 189 B.C. His son, Demetrios, extended Bactria further, and it was he, not his father, who invaded India.

Demetrios. In the light of his reconstruction of the history of this period, Dr. Tarn feels justified in concluding that "the story of Macedonia repeated itself, line upon line, in the Farther East, Euthydemus was Philip II, Bactria was Macedonia, the derelict Maurya empire was the Persian empire, and Demetrius was a second Alexander."* The hypothesis of Demetrios deliberately following in the footsteps of Alexander the Great is based on the elephant-scalp worn by both on their coins, the title of "the Invincible" common to them, and the Graeco-Indian kingdom established by Demetrios—an equal partnership between the two peoples—in harmony with Alexander's ideal of Perso-Greek equality and unification. Whatever may be the truth about the noble aim of Demetrios to translate Alexander's dream into practice, there is no doubt that his achievements in India were far greater than those of his prototype or of Darius I; he left behind him in India his capable lieutenant, Menander, to continue his task. We have seen the general course of the Greek invasion conducted by Demetrios and Menander.

* Tarn, *op. cit.*, p. 410.

From Taxila two lines of advance were chalked out, one in the direction of Pataliputra under the latter and another southwards under the former, who achieved the conquest of Sindh. Apollodotos marched further south as far as Barygaza (Broach), and subsequently seized Madhyamika (Nagari near Chitor, Rajputana) and, most probably, Ujjain. The inclusion of Ujjain, Taxila and Pataliputra in the Indo-Greek empire leads Dr. Tarn to imagine the possibility that Demetrios, a Seleucid on the distaff side, aimed at stepping into the shoes of Asoka, also a semi-Seleucid, according to the story of Chandragupta's or Bindusara's marriage with a Syrian princess. Whatever might be his objective, it was not realised because he had to leave India to deal with the hostility of Eukratides His empire included, besides his Indian possessions, Afghanistan, most of Baluchistan, Russian Turkistan, and a part of Chinese Turkistan—an empire more extensive than that of Seleukos Nikator.

Menander. After the conquest of Bactria as the agent of Antiochos IV, Eukratides invaded India about 165 B C. and overthrew Apollodotos, but before he could cross the Indus, his progress was checked by Menander, and an agreement was made between the two. Menander married Agathokleia, the daughter of Demetrios, and, from about 160 to 150 B C. was supreme in the Indo-Greek territory from Gandhara to Mathura, he also held the Indus Valley down to Sindh and further south up to Broach, excluding Madhyamika and Ujjain, his capital being Sagala His administration was Greek only to a small extent—a Greek king, a semi-Greek army, and Greek higher officials. A few cities were organised on the Greek model, and the military colonies were not numerous In other words, his empire was more Indian than Greek in accordance with his master's ideal of racial partnership. The Pali *Milindapanha*, or Questions of Milinda (Menander), is proof positive of his adherence to Buddhism, whatever his precise appreciation of it may be. Plutarch says that

Menander's ashes were divided among several Indian cities which had quarrelled about their possession, and each city erected a monument over its share. His coins with the legend *dikaios* or *dharmika* (the Just) are rarities; the wheel is found on his bronze coins. Dr. Tarn questions the view that he was a Buddhist, though it cannot be proved that he was not a Buddhist, and emphasises the regular title Soter or Saviour and the Goddess Athena on his coins; he is too optimistic regarding the Alexandrian proclivities of Demetrios and too pessimistic about the Buddhist tendencies of Menander.

Later Indo-Greeks. The Greek rule in India lasted for more than a century after the death of Menander. Heliokles, the successor of Eukratides in Bactria, annexed Gandhara and Taxila between 145 and 141 B.C. Menander was succeeded by Strato I, a minor, and his mother Agathokleia as Regent controlled the dominion between the Jhelum and Mathura; the southern provinces, Sindh and Kathiawar, became gradually independent. Heliokles was practically the last ruler of Bactria, which was overwhelmed by nomads after 140 B.C.—not the Sakas but the Yueh-chi, according to Dr. Tarn. His successors' authority was confined to the region between the Hindu Kush and the Jhelum, the successors of Menander holding that from the Jhelum to Mathura. Thus there were two Greek royal houses in North-Western India, ruling over the territory to the west and east of the Jhelum respectively, though this division was obscured to some extent by marriage connections between the two lines. Antialkidas of the Besnagar inscription succeeded Heliokles; his date depends on the date of that record. His capital was Taxila. He was the last king of his line to retain possession of the whole of the western kingdom. In the eastern kingdom, Agathokleia and Strato I were followed by their successors, who changed the capital from Sagala to Bucephala. The Sakas invaded India about 120 B.C. and occupied the territory from Sindh to Kathiawar. About

80 B.C., they moved up the Indus Valley under Maues and seized Taxila and Gandhara. About 90 B.C. Mathura became independent, but was conquered by the Sakas about 60 B.C Thirty years later, they put an end to the eastern kingdom of Hippostratos. The western kingdom under Hermaios and his queen Kalliope—it had become divided into three parts: Taxila, Pushkalavati and Kapisa—was overthrown by the Parthians about the same time, *i e*, 30 B.C.

Effects of Indo-Greek Rule. Some cities of the Greek type like Pushkalavati, Bucephala and Demetrios flourished, besides the Greek administrative organisation and the Greek language. The bilingual coinage was continued by the Sakas, the Parthians and the early Kushans. The use of the Seleucid era was widely imitated, and other eras were founded by the succeeding dynasties Trade with the West obtained a stimulus. There were many mutual influences of a temporary character between the Greeks and the Hindus But " (except for the Buddha statue,) the history of India would have been essentially what it has been had Greeks never existed "* The ultimate failure of the Greeks in India was due to their incapacity for combination and to the substantial energy of the Indian states, coupled with the irruption of the barbarians.

SECTION IV. THE SAKAS AND THE PAHLAVAS

Sakas. The period between the destruction of Indo-Greek rule and the advent of the Kushans is complicated by the rule of other foreign princes, whose nationality and chronology—and the identify of some of their names—are debated by scholars, and the difficulty is apparently solved, to some extent, by a few who regard them as Sakas or Scythians The Indo-Parthians or Pahlavas seem to be Parthianised Sakas The invasion of

* *Ibid*, p. 408.

India by these foreign tribes was caused by tribal movements in Central Asia in the 2nd century B.C., associated with the name of the Yueh-chi, to which tribe the Kushans belonged. As the successors of the Indo-Greeks, the Sakas imitated their coinage, and their satrapal system of administration was Parthian with Greek features. Their characteristic title is *Rajaraja* or king of kings, and their name is attached to a famous era. The Satraps, Maues and his successors, became independent in due course—Liaka-Kusulaka and Patika at Taxila and Rajuvula and Sodasa at Mathura, jointly called the Northern Satraps to differentiate them from the Satraps of Maharashtra and Ujjain, or Western Satraps. Azes I, the successor of Maues, was the founder of an era. The Satraps of Taxila were overthrown by the Pahlavas and of Mathura by the Kushans.

Pahlavas. The Indo-Parthians belonged to two dynasties founded by Vonones and Gondophernes respectively, whose history is based on numismatic data. The latter ruled during A.D. 19—45 over Afghanistan and Taxila. His conversion to Christianity by St. Thomas is mentioned in a Christian story originating in the 3rd century A.D., according to which that saint became a martyr. Dr. Smith thinks that his martyrdom at Mylapore (Madras) is more probable. The successors of Gondophernes, weakened by their mutual quarrels, were superseded by the Kushans.

SECTION V. THE KUSHAN CHRONOLOGY

Chronology: Character of the Problem. The problem of Kushan chronology is practically the question of the date of Kanishka, because we have a series of dates from 1 to 99 of an era for him and his successors. Further there is the connected problem of the priority of the Kadphises group (Kadphises I and II) to the Kanishka group (Kanishka to Vasudeva); and as this point has been positively and decisively answered by archaeological evidence, we may reckon back the period of the two

Kadphises from the initial date of Kanishka This chronological problem is related to the origin of the two leading eras—Vikrama and Saka. There is no doubt that Kanishka founded an era, used by him and his successors Dr Fleet and a few other scholars regard Kanishka as the inaugurator of the Vikrama era of 58-57 B C, whereas many ascribe to him the foundation of the Saka era (78 A.D)

Four Chief Theories Among the many theories of Kanishka's date, it is sufficient if four of them are examined first century B C , first century A D , second century A D , and third century A.D The first view is based on the use of Greek in Kanishka's coin legends, on the supposed priority of the Kanishka group to Kadphises I belonging to the first half of the first century A.D , and on the statement of Hiuen Tsang that Kanishka lived four hundred years after the Buddha's death But the posteriority of the Kanishka group to the Kadphises group is established by excavations at Taxila, and the first hypothesis is now quite dead The second theory is founded on numismatic evidence The coins of Kadphises II and Kanishka are found together in many places and exhibit similarities If the Kanishka group had preceded the Kadphises group, such a juxtaposition would be hard to explain and we should rather have the coins of Vasudeva and Kadphises I together, and that is not the case So Kanishka should have followed Kadphises II Further the head of Kadphises I put on his copper coins is similar to that of the Roman Emperor Augustus (27 B C—A D 14), Tiberius (A D 14—37) or Claudius (A D 41—54), and Kadphises II's gold coins agree in weight with the *aurei* of the early Roman empire So the two Kadphises are to be assigned to the first half of the first century A D and Kanishka who came after them to the second half of that century Moreover the priority of the Kadphises group is confirmed by the evidence of the spade So Kanishka may be considered

to be the founder of the Saka era of A.D. 78. But some scholars assign him to the second century A.D.; Dr. Sten Konow on the strength of Tibetan and Chinese documents, and Sir John Marshall on archaeological evidence. The buildings at the Chir Stupa (Taxila) are found in four different strata, and each stratum is associated with the coins of the following kings: uppermost or 1st—Vasudeva; 2nd—Kanishka and Huvishka; 3rd—Kadphises I and II; and 4th—Saka and Pahlava. The monuments associated with Kanishka are similar to those of Taxila belonging to the second century A.D. So he must have lived in that century. Accepting this conclusion, Dr. Smith works out the Kushan chronology as follows:—Starting with A.D. 40 for the accession of Kadphises I, he is allowed a reign of thirty-eight years, because of his death at the age of more than 80 years and because it is likely that his successor founded the era of A.D. 78. Kadphises II is supposed to have ruled for thirty-two years on account of his extensive conquests and his abundant coinage. Giving ten years to "the nameless king" of the numismatists, Kanishka's accession is placed in $40+38+32+10=$A.D. 120. But the foundation of an era by Kadphises II is not supported by any positive evidence. Since Kadphises I died very old, the period assigned to his immediate successor may have to be reduced. The provision of an interval between Kadphises II and Kanishka is not necessary. Above all, we have no reasons for believing that an era was inaugurated about A.D. 120. The fourth hypothesis placing Kanishka in the 3rd century A.D. and connecting him with the Traikutaka era of 248-9 is clearly untenable, because Kanishka and his successors down to Vasudeva ruled for nearly one hundred years, and to assign the former to about A.D. 250 would take the latter, who held Mathura, to about A.D. 350. But the Allahabad Pillar inscription of Samudragupta (about A.D. 350) informs us that India west of Mathura was possessed by a number

of republican tribes A long interval should be allowed between Vasudeva and Samudragupta for the development of the political conditions portrayed in the latter's inscription Since the first and fourth theories are easily eliminated, the real conflict is between the second and third theories A D 78 is to be preferred because of its marking the commencement of a great era

Kanishka and the Saka Era The Saka era of A D 78 is ascribed to Vonones (Sir R G Bhandarkar), Nahapana (Dr Fleet), Chastana (Prof Jouveau Dubreuil), Gautamiputra Satakarni (Mr Bakhle), Kadphises II (Dr Sten Konow) and Kanishka (many scholars like Prof Rapson) Vonones, an Indo Parthian ruler, would not have founded the Saka era, he was older than Azes I, the Northern Satrap who came to power about 7 B C There is practically no doubt that Nahapana and Chashtana use the Saka era but their known inscriptional dates are 41 and 52 which are too late to make them founders of that era Moreover, as provincial governors they could not be regarded as the inaugurators of an era The Satakarnis or Satavahanas date their records in regnal years, and not in the years of any era Even if they founded an era it would not have been named after their enemies the Sakas who were defeated by Gautamiputra Moreover, the name Salivahana or Satavahana was applied to the Saka era only in A D 1272* The inscriptions or coins of Kadphises II contain no date referable to any era We have seen that Kanishka is to be assigned on archaeological evidence to the first or second century A D Dr Sten Konow supports A D 128 9 for the commencement of Kanishka's reign but no era known to us started in that year, and he founded an era, in the years of which are dated his records and those of his successors Therefore it is reasonable to regard him as the founder of the

* *IA* 1908 p 53

-era of A.D. 78, and he was a Saka. The question of the nationality of the Kushans has been discussed; they were not Turks but Sakas.*

Kanishka's Final Date. The inscriptional dates for Kanishka and his successors are: Kanishka, 1—23; Vasishka, 24—28; Huvishka, 28—60; Kanishka, 41; and Vasudeva, 74—99. Dr. Sten Konow thinks that Kanishka ruled only for 23 years and that he was succeeded by Vasishka, who in his turn was followed by Kanishka II. In other words, the Kharoshthi inscription at Ara on the Indus, near Attock, dated in 41, does not belong to the great Kanishka but to his grandson Kanishka II. The record runs as follows: "Of the Maharaja, Rajatiraja, Devaputra, Kaisara, Vajheshkaputra Kanishka, in the 41st year....this well was dug....for the welfare of all beings in the (various) births"† The first title is Indian; the second, originally Iranian; the third, Chinese ("Son of Heaven"); and the fourth, Roman. Dr. Sten Konow assigns the Ara inscription to Kanishka II, because Vasishka assumed imperial titles like Maharaja, Rajatiraja and Devaputra Shahi; further, the mention of Kanishka's father's name is unique in Kushan inscriptions, and it is intended to distinguish the two Kanishkas. But Vasishka issued no coins of his own, and the expression Vajheshkaputra may well apply to the great Kanishka. Moreover, his continuous absence from India, owing to protracted warfare outside, can explain Vasishka's imperial titles. Above all, Dr. Sten Konow's theory means that Kanishka was followed by Vasishka, Huvishka, Kanishka II and Huvishka again. But the identification of the Kanishka of the Ara record with the great Kanishka can avoid such an untenable dynastic succession. Therefore Kanishka must have been directly

* Sten Konow, *Kharoshthi Inscriptions* (C.I.I., II), Historical Introduction, pp. L–LI and LXI.

† *Ibid.*, p. 165.

succeeded by Huvishka, Vasishka from 24 to 28 and Huvishka from 28 to 40 must have remained as the deputy of Kanishka, who must have returned to India in or before 41 and died in or after that year, Huvishka stepping into his place as emperor Therefore Kanishka must have died about 78 + 41 = A.D 119 or 120 Kadphises I and II have to be placed before A.D 78, Kanishka in 78—120, Huvishka in 120—38, and Vasudeva in 152—77

SECTION VI KANISHKA AND HIS PREDECESSORS

Kadphises I After the occupation of Bactria by the Yueh-chi, five chieftainships developed and continued to exist till Kujula Kadphises, or Kadphises I, founded a united kingdom, named after the Kushan section of the tribe to which he belonged He extended his dominions to the borders of India by annihilating the remnants of the Pahlava power The Roman influence on his coinage is patent He calls himself " the great king, the king of kings " He seems to have been a Buddhist He lived in the first half of the first century A D and died when he was over eighty years old

Kadphises II It was Wima Kadphises, or Kadphises II, who conquered India proper, and his coins are found as far east as Benares The provenance of his coins does not necessarily indicate the extent of his conquest He seems to have annexed the country as far as Mathura. He assumed imperial titles like " the lord of the whole world," and his bilingual (Greek and Indian) gold and copper coins show that he worshipped Siva

The Empire of Kanishka (*c* A D 78—*c* 120) Kanishka was the most warlike and ablest of the Kushans He extended his Indian heritage by conquering Northern India as far as Pataliputra and Bodh Gaya and Malwa and Sindh He is said to have abducted Asvaghosa the great Buddhist author, from Pataliputra Kashmir was

included in his empire, and his monuments are found there; and he founded Kanishkapura. His coins and inscriptions exist from Peshawar to Benares and Gorakhpur (U.P). From his capital Purushapura or Peshawar, he governed his empire with the assistance of Kshatrapas and Mahakshatrapas. Outside India he added to his ancestral possessions. In A.D. 87 he styled himself "Devaputra" and challenged the Chinese emperor. His first expedition against China failed, and he was defeated by Pan-chao. But ultimately he succeeded in gaining Kashgar, Yarkand and Khotan from China, consequent on his victory over Pan-yang, the son of Pan-chao. Kanishka is said to have triumphed over the Parthian king as well, and ended his life in a distant northern expedition. It appears that he assumed the title of Kaiser or Caesar. His imperial success is further reflected in his foundation of an era, most probably the Saka era.

Kanishka's Appreciation of Buddhism. Though the date of Kanishka's conversion to Buddhism is not known, there is no doubt about the occurrence itself. It seems that he embraced that religion quite early in his reign. Inasmuch as the Buddhist story mostly repeats the details connected with Asoka, there is no knowing the real attachment of Kanishka to his new faith. Only a few of his coins exhibit the image of the Buddha, whereas his other coins mention Greek, Zoroastrian and Hindu gods, and consequently it is thought that the great Kushan emperor must have been an eclectic in religion. But this deduction from the numismatic data is not necessary as we may suppose that the religions indicated by the coins were those of his heterogeneous subjects. Still it must be admitted that he never imbibed the pacific teaching of Buddhism as his uninterrupted martial career suggests. Whatever may be the inwardness of his spiritual rebirth, he actively espoused the cause of his adopted faith, Mahayanism.

Mahayanism Doctrines In the age of Kanishka, a new form of Buddhism was coming into vogue different in many respects from the religion taught by the Buddha and propagated by Asoka, called respectively the Maha yana (the Great Path) and the Hinayana (the Little Path), by the followers of the former school In spite of the two *yanas* being based on the *Buddhavachana,* their differences are striking and fundamental The deification and multiplication of the Buddha resulted in the creation of a pantheon presided over by him. Every man can attain Buddhahood, and to become a Buddha, according to the *Saddharmapundarika* (Lotus of the True Law, a standard work on Mahayanism), one should become a Bodhisattva, or potential Buddha, by living thousands of charitable and strenuous lives Hence the Mahayana is the Bodhisattvayana The Buddhas and the Bodhi sattvas are conceived as living forces capable of helping people in their pursuit of salvation, they should be worshipped with flowers, garments, perfumes, lamps umbrellas etc Thus image worship and ritual developed. Besides devout prayers to them, gifts should be made to the needy, and acts of self sacrifice performed for the welfare of the world Therefore the emphasis was on worship, prayer, devotion and active morality If spiritual progress were made on such lines the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas would actively aid human beings in their efforts The doctrine of transfer of merit, seriously modifying the law of *karma,* became a leading feature of the Mahayana as well as altruism and *bhakti* or salvation by faith In short, the veneration for the deceased Buddha characteristic of Hinayanism, ripened into the worship of the living Saviour Moreover, the the Buddha was invested with a triple body—the doctrine of *trikaya* the *Dharmakaya* or Body of the Law, iden tified with *nirvana* the ultimate reality the *Sambhoga kaya* or Body of Bliss when he appears in divine splendour, and the *Nirmanakaya* or Body of Transforma

tion, the human body of the Buddha regarded as a transformation, or even a distortion, of his true nature. The Bodhisattva ideal of activity superseded the Arhat ideal of inactivity; ten stages, instead of four, were distinguished in his progress, each leading to the acquisition of a virtue. Among the numerous Bodhisattvas, the most conspicuous are Avalokitesvara and Manjusri. Secondly, the Buddha had stressed that nirvana was a practical goal to be attained by self-effort; there was no use of seeking the help of gods or men in the pursuit of salvation—a simple and austere doctrine. But, the Mahayana made the goal of *nirvana* a distant one, and the Bodhisattva should delay his attainment of *nirvana* in order to help mankind. The Mahayanists freely discussed the Buddha's undetermined questions and developed a passion for metaphysics; while he had denied the permanence of the soul, they denied the whole of the phenomenal world. They were divided into two chief philosophical schools—Madhyami(a)kas and Yogacharins or Vijnanavadins. Both deny the reality of the external world, but while the latter regard *vijnana* or consciousness as real, the former deny the reality of both objective and subjective worlds. Hence their doctrine is called *sunyavada* or nihilism, the doctrine, strictly speaking, that the absolute truth, the realisation of which alone leads to *nirvana*, is devoid of all attributes. Both Madhyamikas and Vijnanavadins distinguish between relative and absolute truth, and this metaphysics profoundly influenced Gaudapada and his spiritual grandson Sankara, whose teacher was Govinda, the disciple of Gaudapada.

Chronology. The earliest of the principal Mahayanist scriptures are the *Prajnaparamita*, the *Saddharmapundarika* and the *Lalitavistara*, which are in Sanskrit; the sanctity of books and the efficacy for salvation of some of the *sutras* are Mahayanist idea foreign to Hinayanism. The earliest Chinese translation of the *Prajnaparamita*

the Bactrian Greeks, Saka-Pahlavas and the Kushans; that the *Milindapanha* is a dialogue between a Buddhist saint and Menander, a Bactrian Greek; that the *trikaya* conception corresponds to the Christian doctrine of the Trinity; and that Greek art influenced the art of Gandhara, and therefore it could have influenced Indian religion.* But our study of the origin and precursors of the Mahayana shows that its development on the doctrinal side was on indigenous lines. Still the introduction of the Buddha and other images was inspired by Greek art; and the ideal of charity and active morality, the figures of the Bodhisattvas, and the conception of Paradise were influenced by Iranian ideas.

Merits and Defects. The question is asked whether Mahayanism is a development or perversion of Hinyanism, and the answer is that it is both. Its superiority is found in its full theism, in its altruism, and in its desire to save all. It is dead against meat-eating. It transcends the monastic, self-centred ideal of the Hinayana, and stands for greater humanity and charity. But it goes against some of the basic doctrines of the Buddha—the law of *karma, self-effort, speedy nirvana,* etc. It created fantastic heavens and hells and increased popular superstition. Its permission to sin in order to benefit others is a dangerously lax doctrine, as well as the easy expiation of sins by confession and other means. The monastic ideal becomes a mockery in the light of the life of Bhartrihari (7th century A.D.), who "became seven times a priest, and seven times returned to the laity." (I-tsing), and the religious ideal is perverted when the married man is regarded as best fitted for the career of a Bodhisattva, when he can enjoy all sensual pleasures, and when the consequential sins may be easily expiated. The self-centredness of Hinayanism has been exaggerated;

* A. B. Keith, *Buddhist Philosophy in India and Ceylon* (1923), pp. 216-17.

the Buddha emphasises activity, charity, compassion, altruism, and, above all, self reliance and self-discipline "If we look at the abuses of both systems the fossilized monk of the Hinayana will compare favourably with the tantric expert It was to the corruptions of the Mahayana rather than of the Hinayana that the decay of Buddhism in India was due"* The Mantrayana prescribes *mantras* as the chief means to salvation, another branch of Mahayanism is the Vajrayana (Tantrism or Saktism), "a curious mixture of monistic philosophy, magic and erotics, with a small admixture of Buddhist ideas"† The extreme laxity of the Mahayana in some respects led to scandalous abuses Still the two *yanas* may be regarded as mutually supplementary, though they pursued their careers separately

The Fourth Buddhist Council The councils of Asoka and Kanishka are regarded as the third and last by the Ceylonese Chronicles and Northern Buddhist traditions respectively So neither of them could be reckoned as a general council like the first or second council According to Hiuen Tsang, Kanishka sought the help of Parsva for an authoritative statement of the views of the numerous schools of Buddhism A council of 500 monks, including Vasumitra and Asvaghosha and presided over by the former, was held in the Kundalavana monastery near Srinagar (Kashmir), and the *Mahavibhasha*, or the Great Commentary on the *Tripitaka*, was written out on copper plates and enclosed in stone boxes, over which a *stupa* was erected According to Tibetan accounts however, the council met at Jalandhara (Jullundur, the Panjab), and from 1000 to 1500 monks participated in its proceedings In spite of discrepancies in the accounts of the council, it may be credited

* Eliot *op cit* II pp 89 — —

† M Winternitz *A History of Indian Literature* II (1933), p 388

with the attempt to reconcile the eighteen sects and regarded as an assembly mainly of Hinayanists. Therefore Kanishka, the great patron of Mahayanism, helped Hinayanism to consolidate its position against the growing strength of its rival. As regards the date of the council, Kanishka failed against General Pan-chao, who died in A.D. 102,* but not against his son Pan-yang, and must have returned to India in or before A.D. 119; this is confirmed by the political position of Vasishka in India between 102 and 106. Therefore the council must have been held before 102, say about A.D. 100. Mr. R. D. Banerji however suggests A.D. 115.†

Kanishka As Second Asoka. Probably missionary propaganda in Central Asia and China was organised. Buddhist art and literature were patronised by Kanishka, the leading authors being Asvaghosha, Nagarjuna and Charaka in literature, philosophy and medicine respectively. Though purely indigenous art flourished at Mathura and Sarnath and though the headless statue of Kanishka, discovered near Mathura, does not exhibit any trace of Greek influence, North-Western India was dominated by the Graeco-Buddhist school of Gandhara, which produced many statues of the Buddha. Kanishka's *stupa* at Peshawar, enshrining the relics of the Buddha, was built by Agesilaos, a Greek. The art of Gandhara is a blend of Graeco-Roman and Indian arts, scholars disagreeing about its character and value. Kanishka's bilingual coinage, in spite of its many Asiatic features, continued the Roman technique adopted by his predecessors. Though Buddhist literature brackets Kanishka and Asoka as great benefactors of Buddhism, there is no real comparison between the two; as Buddhists they were poles asunder. Superficially both were converts who co-operated with the Church by interesting themselves

* *I.A.*, 1908, p. 59

† *Ibid.*, p. 73.

in her matters like the convocation of a council of theologians the building of religious edifices, and the adoption of measures for proselytism Even as patron of Buddhism, Kanishka cannot stand by the side of Asoka, at any rate, our knowledge of the latter is much more extensive and definite No doubt Mahayanism found its leading patron in Kanishka, who may be regarded as the Constantine of Buddhism rather than as its second Asoka

Glory of his Epoch. The reign of Kanishka saw the Kushan empire reaching its greatest extent and highest prosperity Mahayanism was consolidated and prepared for its gigantic achievements in Asia Jainism flourished at Mathura The intimacy of the Kushan relations with the Roman empire whose frontier had been steadily extended eastwards is reflected in the commerce and culture of the period Overland trade connections existed with China as well The cultural progress of the age is decisive proof of the rapid Indianisation of the foreigners who showed no hostility to the religion and civilisation of the conquered

SECTION VII SUCCESSORS OF KANISHKA AND THE BHARASIVAS

Huvishka (*c* 120—*c* 138) and Vasudeva (*c* 152—*c* 177) Huvishka held his father s dominions intact though the ascendancy of Rudradaman I in Malwa and Sindh argues the emancipation of that region from Kushan imperial control Like Kanishka he was a Buddhist and patron of Buddhism and his coins exhibit the images of a number of deities, including Roma like those of his father He built a Buddhist monastery at Mathura and a city named Huvishkapura in Kashmir Under Vasudeva the Kushan empire was much reduced in extent Though his coins are found in the U P the Panjab and Northern Sindh his inscriptions are confined to Mathura Hence the gap of 14 years between the last known date of Huvishka and the initial date of Vasudeva may be

regarded as reflecting the troubles of the empire. Vasudeva's name is indicative of his Hinduisation, and his coins give prominence to Siva and his bull, Nandi. Later literary tradition regards him as a patron of letters.

Decline of the Kushan Empire. After Vasudeva petty Kushan princes reigned in North-Western India, occasionally becoming locally powerful down to the end of the 9th century. It is not easy to account for the decline of the Kushans; Dr. Smith emphasises the plague of A.D. 167 which was fatal to the West and could not but have affected their empire. The Persian characteristics of their coinage may suggest Sassanian aggression against the successors of Vasudeva, and according to the *Puranas*, foreign invasions were numerous. The rapid Hinduisation of the Kushans might have weakened them in their conflicts with the trans-Indus powers. The history of Northern India in the 3rd century A.D. is exceedingly obscure, and only now and then, and in some parts of it, is a ray of light available to us.

The Bharasivas. The hiatus between the Kushans and the Guptas is to some extent filled up by our recently acquired knowledge of the Bharasivas, thanks to inscriptions and coins coupled with Puranic testimony. The Bharasiva Nagas worshipped Siva, venerated the bull, and became famous as the performers of ten horse-sacrifices. Their power extended from Bihar to Malwa and from the Central Provinces to the Eastern Panjab,* and was strong particularly in the Mathura region. Of the seven kings of the line, the second, Virasena, may be assigned to the fourth quarter of the second century A.D., and the last, Bhavanaga, to the close of the next century and the beginning of the fourth century A.D.† Virasena emancipated the United Provinces and the Panjab from

* K. P. Jayaswal, *History of India, 150 A.D. to 350 A.D.* (1933), p. 55.
† *Ibid.*, p. 28.

the Kushan yoke and captured Mathura probably about A D 180 *i e*, after the reign of Vasudeva Gautami putra the eldest son of Pravarasena I Vakataka married the daughter of Bhavanaga, the emphasis laid on this marriage in the inscriptions of the Vakatakas reveals the greatness of that Bharasiva After playing an important part in Indian history for more than a century the Bharasiva Nagas gave place to the Guptas and Samudragupta's Allahabad Pillar Inscription mentions the extermination of more than one Naga prince

SECTION VIII THE WESTERN SATRAPS

Origin That the Western Satraps were foreigners is clearly indicated by the employment of the Kharoshthi script on their early coins and by the very term Kshatrapa (or Satrap), a Sanskritised form of a Persian word "Khshathrapavan" meaning protector of the land Inscriptions describe them as Sakas and Pahlavas and Ptolemy's Indo Scythia is almost identical with the kingdom of Rudradaman I There were two dynasties of Western Satraps—the lines of Bhumaka and Chashtana Some regard Bhumaka and Nahapana as Pahlavas and Chashtana and Rudradaman as Sakas Though the name of Nahapana is Parthian and that of Ysamotika father of Chashtana, Sala, the suffix *daman* in the names of Rudradaman and his successors may well be identical with the *dama* of the Persian word "Spalagadama" Moreover Usavadata the son in law of Nahapana was a Saka Bhumaka and Nahapana are called Kshaharatas or Khaharatas a name not different from "Kardau" a Saka tribe Some say that Ysamotika and Bhumaka are one and the same because the Saka word *Ysama* = Bhu = earth Another argument advanced is that in Indian literature the Pahlavas are described as a people with whiskers and that Nahapana is without whiskers on his coins Therefore he was a Saka along with the Khaharatas of Taxila and Mathura, some of whom had Pahlava names like Liaka, Patika and Ghatika It appears that

in India the two nationalities, Saka and Pahlava, became so mixed up as to obscure their origin.

Nahapana. The Saka invasion of India towards the close of the 2nd century B.C. gradually spread to the Maratha country and eclipsed the power of the Satavahanas in the first century A.D. In the time of Bhumaka and Nahapana, the Western Satraps struck their own coins, perhaps indicative of their independent position. It was under the latter that they became most powerful. His coins and the inscriptions of his son-in-law, Ushavadata, show that his dominions extended from Poona to Ajmer, including Kathiawar and Malwa. The Nasik inscriptions of Ushavadata enumerate his charities to Brahmans and his gift of a cave to monks with a sum of money deposited in guilds and bearing interest. Nahapana is mentioned as a Kshatrapa and a Mahakshatrapa, and the years found in the Nasik and Junnar inscriptions range from 41 to 46. His capital was probably Nasik, though some would regard him as ruling from Junnar (Poona District), Minnagara (Mandasor), or Broach. His power came to a sudden collapse by his crushing defeat at the hands of Gautamiputra Satakarni, the greatest of the Satavahanas, who restruck the former's coins as a mark of his triumph.

Date. On the assumption that the years mentioned above are Saka years, Nahapana is to be assigned to the period A.D. $78+41=119$ to $78+46=124$. But this dating has been called in question on the ground that the Nahapana-Gautamiputra synchronism is untenable in the light of numismatic and scriptal considerations. Though Gautamiputra restruck 9,270 out of 13,250 coins of Nahapana found in the Nasik District, the portraits on them are so different that all of them could not be those of Nahapana. Therefore some descendant of the latter must have been defeated by that great Satavahana. The script of the Nasik inscriptions and that of Rudradaman I's

Girnar *prasasti* or eulogy (about A D 150) indicate a minimum interval of 100 years between them In other words Nahapana must have lived before 150 — 100 = A D 50 But these objections are too vague to go against the natural supposition that Nahapana as a technically subordinate ruler would have used an imperial era, i e, the Saka era founded by Kanishka, and that the restriking of his coins by Gautamiputra would make them contemporaries

Chashtana. Not much is known about Chashtana the founder of the second line of Western Satraps He started as the Kushan Satrap of Malwa with Ujjain as his capital but Nahapana's northward move must have affected his position adversely in the decade following Kanishka's death It is practically certain that the dates in the records of his dynasty refer to the Saka era. Therefore his year 52 may be equated with 78 + 52 = A D 130, he cannot be regarded as the founder of that era As that year is common to him and his grandson Rudradaman his son Jayadaman seems to have died too early to succeed his father An Andhau (Cutch) inscription of the same year limiting Chashtana's dominions to that region perhaps reflects the effects on his position of the imperialism of Nahapana followed by that of Gautamiputra Satakarni Soon the tables were turned against the Satavahanas by Rudradaman, the greatest member of the Chashtana dynasty

Rudradaman I (c A D 130—150) The famous Girnar *prasasti* of Mahakshatrapa Rudradaman is the first great inscription in Classical Sanskrit It was composed after the reconstruction of the dam to Lake Sudarsana washed away by floods caused by a terrific storm on the 16th November 150 The history of the lake is briefly sketched in the record its construction by the Vaisya Pushyagupta the provincial governor of Chandragupta Maurya the provision in a royal manner of irrigation canals by the Yavana Tushaspha (probably an Iranian as Kushasp is

a current name among the Parsis today*) on behalf of Asoka Maurya; the beauty and solidity of the embankments with well-provided conduits and drains; in short, its excellent condition before the storm justifying its appellation Sudarsana or Beautiful; the storm is graphically described, and its devastating effects made the lake Durdarsana or Ugly; after the repairs by Rudradaman effected in a short time and at great cost with a view to making the dam more than trebly strong, the lake became Sudarsanatara or More Beautiful.

Character and Accomplishments of Rudradaman. The epigraphical account of Rudradaman's character and accomplishments seems to be conventional, though a few scholars would take it without a grain of salt. It is said that he was elected king by his subjects; he never slew men except in battle; his realm was not troubled by robbers, snakes or diseases; he was famous for his knowledge of grammar, politics, music and logic and for his military skill; his compositions in prose and verse were clear, agreeable, sweet, charming and beautiful; his body was strong, vigorous and handsome; he acquired the title of Mahakshatrapa by self-effort; he never oppressed his subjects with taxes, forced labour, or *pranaya* (benevolences or forced loans). This part of the record, though of limited historical value, throws light on the ideals of the age, administrative and literary, and shows clearly how foreigners became rapidly Hinduised.

Historical Value of the Record. The most valuable portion of the record relates to the extent of Rudradaman's empire, to his conquest of the Yaudheyas and Satakarni, the latter twice, to the opposition of his ministers to the expenditure in connection with the improvement of Lake Sudarsana, and to the execution of the repairs by Amatya Suvisakha (perhaps identical with the Iranian Siavaksha†), a Pahlava and the popular

* M. S. Commissariat, *A History of Gujarat* (1938), p. XXV.
† *Ibid.*

governor of Kathiawar Two kinds of ministers are mentioned *matisachiva* (counsellors) and *karmasachiva* (executive officers) When they disapproved of the costly repairs to the lake on the ground that the breach was too wide Rudradaman provided the necessary funds from his own purse in order to remove the despair of his subjects

Conflict with the Satavahanas Rudradaman claims to have become famous because he did not "extirpate" Satakarni on account of his 'non remote relationship" with him though the latter had been defeated in two clearly fought battles Who was this Satakarni? The answer to this question depends on the chronology of the Satavahanas regarding which there is no agreement among scholars Therefore various identifications of the defeated Satakarni ranging from Gautamiputra to Yajna Satakarni, have been proposed According to the chronology adopted here Gautamiputra ceased to reign about A D 130 and his successor Vasishtiputra Pulumayi ruled from that date to about A D 158 Therefore the latter must have received the double blow of Rudradaman The view that he was the son in law of the Mahakshatrapa is contradicted by the expression "non remote relationship" A Kanheri cave inscription refers to the Queen of Vasishtiputra Satakarni as the daughter of Rudradaman the Maha kshatrapa Therefore the son in law in question was probably the brother of Pulumayi

Extent of the Empire The extent of Rudradaman's empire is clear from the enumeration of its political divisions in the record itself Malwa Kathiawar Marwar Cutch Sindh North Konkan etc Of these the first two and the last had belonged to Gautamiputra Satakarni Rudradaman s generosity to the defeated Satavahana is confirmed by the latter s possession of Nasik and other regions of the Satavahana dominions further south

Successors of Rudradaman I. The Chashtana dynasty consisted of twenty princes who actually ruled. Inscriptions and coins give us full genealogical and chronological details. The eighteen successors of Rudradaman I had the title of Kshatrapa or Mahakshatrapa. There was a usurpation by Isvaradatta Abhira during A.D. 236—38. From 295 to 348 there were no Mahakshatrapas. About 250 the kingdom was partitioned, and the coinage of the dynasty deteriorated. During the first half of the fourth century the Sassanian rulers of Persia eclipsed by their Indian conquests the power of the Western Satraps. When their hold over India was relaxed, there was a revival of the latter about 348, signalised by the resumption of the title Mahakshatrapa, but Samudragupta exerted his influence on them. The last prince Rudrasimha III ascended the throne in 388. Bana describes him as a *parakalatrakamuka*, or lady-killer, who was deprived of his life by Chandragupta (II), disguised as a woman. The *Devichandraguptam* of Visakhadatta says that the Scythian king wanted that Dhruvadevi, the queen of Ramagupta, brother of Chandragupta II, should be sent to him. In this emergency Chandragupta, dressed like a lady, went to the Scythian ruler, and meted out to him the punishment he richly deserved. When Dhruvadevi became a widow subsequently, Chandragupta made her his queen, and there is also a tradition that he killed his brother. The date of the Gupta annexation of Western India is about 395, *i.e.*, before the Udayagiri (in Malwa) inscription (A.D. 401) of Chandragupta II.

SECTION IX. THE SATAVAHANAS

Chronology. The *Puranas* give a list of Andhra kings and their reign-periods. Excluding minor discrepancies, about thirty kings are mentioned as ruling for about four hundred and fifty years by the *Matsya Purana*. Leaving out inconsistencies, the *Vayu Purana* may be taken as giving three hundred years for about nineteen princes. This major difference between the two *Puranas* is recon-

ed by some scholars on the assumption that in one case we have a consolidated list of all the kings and in the other a list of rulers of the main branch of the Andhras The difference between 450 and 300 = 150 years agrees roughly with the total duration of the rule of the Sungas *and the Kanvas*—112 + 45 = 157 years. *On the basis of* the contemporaneity of the Sungas the Kanvas and the Andhras it may be thought that one hundred and fifty is to be omitted from four hundred and fifty and the remaining three hundred years regarded as the duration of the Andhra regime Reckoning from 188 B C the period of three hundred years ends in 300 — 188 = A D 112 If the Andhras began to rule earlier than 188 B C they should have ceased to rule sooner than A D 112 and as the Andhras from Gautamiputra (No 23) ruled for more than one hundred years, that great sovereign will have to be placed about 112 — 100 = A D 12 The impossibility of such an early date for him excludes the possibility of the Andhras having ruled only for three hundred years But a few scholars who accept this period inconsistently make the end of Sunga sovereignty synchronous with the commencement of Andhra rule on the ground that the *Puranas* say that the first Andhra destroyed the Sungas and the Kanvas and that therefore only these two dynasties were contemporary they would calculate the Andhra period from 188 — 112 B C = 76 B C to 300 — 76 = A D 224 Though the later Andhra chronology thus becomes satisfactory, its starting point in the first century B C cannot be accepted as the Nasik and Nanaghat inscriptions of the early Satavahanas belong to the beginning of the second century B C on scriptal grounds Therefore the Andhras must have ruled for about four hundred and fifty not for three hundred years only

Commencement of Satavahana Rule The starting point of the Satavahana chronology is to be arrived at on the basis of the synchronism of Gautamiputra with Naha

pana. The Nasik inscription of Gautami Balasri, the mother of Gautamiputra, mentions his extermination of the Khaharata family and his restoration of the glory of the Satavahanas. The Jogaltembhi (Nasik District, Bombay) coins of Nahapana were restruck by Gautamiputra, and therefore the latter defeated the former. The inscriptions of Gautamiputra at Nasik and Karle show that that victory was won in his eighteenth regnal year. We have seen that Nahapana's final date so far known is A.D. 124. Therefore his conqueror's initial date = 124 − 18 = A.D. 106, and as he ruled for twenty-four years, according to inscriptional evidence, his final date = 106 + 24 = A.D. 130. The objections to the Gautamiputra-Nahapana synchronism have already been disposed of. We have also rejected the possibility of Gautamiputra's foundation of the Saka era of A.D. 78. According to the *Matsya Purana*, the interval between Simuka (No. 1) and Gautamiputra (No. 23) is three hundred and forty-one years, and that between kings 23 and 30, about one hundred and eleven years. The reign-periods given by that *Purana*, slightly corrected by inscriptions, and the chronology founded on them, are as follows.

S. NO.	NAME OF KING.	REIGN-PERIOD.	DATE
1.	Simuka (Sisuka)	23	B C. 235—212
2.	Krishna	10	212—202
3.	Satakarni	10	202—192
4.	*Purnotsanga*	18	192—174
5.	Skandastambhi	18	174—156
6.	*Satakarni*	56	156—100
7.	Lambodara	18	100— 82
8.	Apilaka	12	82— 70
9.	Meghasvati	18	70— 52
10.	Svati	18	52— 34
11.	Skandasvati	7	34— 27
12.	Mrigendra Svatikarna	3	27— 24
13.	Kuntala Svatikarna	8	24— 16
14.	Svatikarna	1	16— 15
15.	Pulumayi	36	B.C. 15— 21 A.D.
16.	Arishtakarna	25	21— 46

S. NO.	NAME OF KING	REIGN PERIOD.	DATE
17	Hala	5	46— 51
18	Mantalaka	5	51— 56
19	Purikasena	21	56— 77
20	Sundara Satakarni	1	77— 78
21	Chakora Satakarni	½	78
22	Siva Svati	28	78—106
23	Gautamiputra	21 (24)	106—130
24	Pulumayi	28	130—158
25	Sivasri Pulumayi	7	158—165
26	Sivaskanda Satakarni	3	165—168
27	Yajnasri Satakarni	29	168—197
28	Vijaya	6	197—203
29	Chandasri Satakarni	10	203—213
30	Pulumayi	7	213—220

To the Puranic reign period of Gautamiputra three years have been added in the light of his inscriptions The initial date of the dynasty, 230 B C falls with the last years of Asoka and consequently some would reckon from 232 B C the probable date of Asoka's death The contemporary of Kharavela of Kalinga would be No 5 instead of No 3 and the reference in the Hathigumpha inscription may be regarded as to a Satakarni or Satavahana ruler in general Corrections may be made in the above tentative chronology in the light of well ascertained data

The First Empire The names *Satakarna* (with one hundred ears) and *Satavahana* (bearing the *sata* emblem) may be tribal names Some would identify the tribe with the Sativaputra of Asoka's inscriptions The name Andhra may have become attached to the Satavahanas owing to their conquest of the Andhradesa in later times The original home of the Satavahanas seems to have been the Bellary District, though some would associate them with Northern India Their claim to Brahmanhood is accepted by a few scholars and suspected or rejected by others Their expansion westwa the east coast is now generally discredited

ruler Simuka could not have overthrown either the Sungas or the Kanvas. He must have emancipated himself from the Maurya imperial control a little before or after the death of Asoka. Though he is said to have reigned for twenty-three years, his achievements are not known. Some credit for the territorial growth during the next two reigns should go to him. His successor was his brother Krishna. The latter and his nephew Satakarni, who ruled for ten years each, continued the work of Simuka and established an empire embracing the Godavari Valley up to Nasik and including the Konkan. The Nanaghat (near Poona) inscription mentions the statues of Simuka, Krishna and Satakarni and of Queen Naganika, her father, etc. It seems that the Satavahana conquest of the Maratha country was consolidated by Satakarni's marriage with Naganika, a Maratha lady. He is said to have performed two horse-sacrifices, indicative of his imperial position. Paithan (Aurangabad District, the Nizam's State), on the Godavari, was his capital. The successors of Satakarni (No. 3) must have been responsible for the Satavahana conflict with the Sungas, reflected in the *Malavikagnimitra* of Kalidasa. Their failure was subsequently retrieved by the conquest of Malwa, under perhaps Satakarni (No. 6). His successors must have destroyed the Kanvas and what remained of the Sunga power, seized Pataliputra, and held it for some time. The story of this achievement is obscure, though it is clear that in the triangular contest for Malwa among the Greeks, the Sungas and the Andhras, the last power must have been ultimately successful. No. 13 is apparently the Kuntala Satakarni mentioned in the *Kama Sutra* of Vatsyayana as having caused the death of his queen by a blow (*kartari*) on the head, delivered not out of malice but inadvertently in amorous play. Hala (No. 17) is famous as the author of *Sattasai* (*Saptasati*), 700 stanzas in Prakrit on erotics. The Saka conquest of Malwa and Maharashtra caused the withdrawal of the Satavahanas to the neighbourhood of their ancestral home.

and after a long interval their fortunes were re established by Gautamiputra Satakarni

The Second Empire Gautamiputra Satakarni was the greatest of the Satavahanas, and his splendid achievement is enshrined in the Nasik *prasasti* of his mother, Gautami Balasri, published in the nineteenth regnal year (A.D. 149) of her grandson, Pulumayi Omitting the conventional and monotonous parts of the eulogy, the noteworthy points are the following She refers to herself as "the mother of a Maharaja and grandmother of a Maharaja," and describes Gautamiputra as "the destroyer of Sakas, Yavanas and Pahlavas, the extirpator of the Khaharata family, the restorer of the glory of the Satavahana family, the elevator of his family to high fortune, the unique Brahmana who crushed the pride and conceit of the Kshatriyas" The extent of his empire is indicated in the record Maharashtra, North Konkan, Berar, Gujarat, Kathiawar, Malwa, etc It is significant that the Andhradesa is not mentioned Thus his decisive victory over Nahapana is indirectly elucidated One of his inscriptions records his gift of a piece of land which had belonged to Ushavadata We saw the double defeat of Pulumavi by Rudradaman I, but he could not be regarded as the latter's son in law, seeing that the Girnar eulogy speaks of the defeats of a "non remote" relation of the Mahakshatrapa. He thus lost a part of his father's empire Malwa, Kathiwar and North Konkan But he extended his dominions eastwards and his coins indicate his possession of the coastal territory between the Godavari and the Krishna Though his last regnal year mentioned in his inscriptions is 24, the Puranic figure 28 may be accepted Passing over the reigns of numbers 25 and 26 lasting together for ten years, we come to the last great Satakarni, Yajna His Puranic reign period of twenty nine years is confirmed by inscriptions mentioning his twenty seventh regnal year His epigraphical records are found not only in Maharashtra, but also in North

Konkan and the Krishna District, and his coins, in these regions as well as in Gujarat and Kathiawar. His ship-coins probably suggest his naval power. It is clear that he reconquered from the Western Satraps some of the territories seized by Rudradaman I. There is no manner of doubt regarding his control over the Andhradesa. The last three rulers (28 to 30) were political nonentities, and during their period of nearly 25 years, the Satavahana empire was partitioned among themselves by its powerful feudatories: the Abhiras and the Traikutakas in Maharashtra; the Ikshvakus, the Brihatphalayanas and the Salankayanas in the Andhra country; and the Pallavas in the original home of the Satavahanas.

SECTION X. THE IKSHVAKUS (c A.D. 250—c 300)

Three Kings. Our knowledge of the Ikshvakus or Sriparvatiyas is derived from their inscriptions at Jaggayyapeta (Krishna District) and Nagarjunikonda (Guntur District), which give the names only of three kings, whereas the *Puranas* say that the seven Sriparvatiyas ruled for 52 years. We do not know if they were connected with the rulers of Ayodhya of the same name. About A.D. 250 they ceased to be feudatory to the Satavahanas. The first king, Santamula I, performed many Vedic sacrifices, symptomatic of his independent political status. He was a worshipper of Skanda. His son and successor was Virapurushadatta. Of his five queens, Rudradhara seems to belong to the Chashtana line of Western Satraps, and his daughter was married to a ruler of Banavasi. Inscriptions indicate that he reigned at least for twenty years and his son Santamula II for eleven years. The Ikshvaku dynasty consisting of three members may be allowed fifty years. It was superseded by the Brihatphalayanas and the Pallavas early in the fourth century A.D.

Prosperity of Buddhism. Though Santamula I was devoted to Brahmanism, his son and grandson were

Buddhists who made Nagarjunikonda a famous centre of Buddhist religion and art The inscriptions of Vira purushadatta begin with obeisance to the Buddha *Stupas*, monasteries and pillars were erected by the members of the royal family and private citizens with a view to the attainment of the bliss of *nirvana* Ladies were responsible for the great donations Santisri (sister of the first king) her daughter Bhattidevi (queen of the second king) and Upasika Bodhisri the most distinguished among private donors The inscriptions of Nagarjunikonda mention a number of Buddhist sects and the sculptures exhibit Hinayanist and Mahayanist characteristics Accommodation was provided for monks and nuns of Ceylon and other countries The prosperity of Buddhism in the Ikshvaku kingdom was due to the commercial importance of the locality dominated by Nagarjunikonda to the wealth of the merchants engaged in foreign trade and to royal patronage But this state of things was not of long duration as the Ikshvakus were succeeded by dynasties devoted to the orthodox religion

SECTION XI THE CHOLA CHERA PANDYA HEGEMONY

Chronology of the Sangam Literature The term Sangam Literature is applied to early Tamil works like the *Kural* the twin epics *Silappadikaram* and *Manimekhalai* and particularly to the anthologies or poetical selections dealing with war and love like the *Purananuru* the *Ahananuru* the *Narrinai* and the *Kuruntokai* traditionally ascribed to the third Sangam or Academy of Madura The age of these compositions the Augustan age of Tamil Literature is a much debated basic question of early Tamil history The three main views on this problem ascribe their production to different periods seventh and eighth centuries A D , fifth century A D and the first three centuries of the Christian era The first view is founded on the astronomical data of the *Paripadal* and the *Silappadikaram*, yielding two dates,

17th June, A.D. 634 and 23rd July, A.D. 756. But during this period of Pallava dominance, the Cholas, the Pandyas and the Cheras were not conspicuous, and the Sangam works give prominence to these latter powers, without even mentioning the Pallavas. In Tamil India the seventh and eight centuries witnessed the vigorous growth of Saivism and Vaishnavism which showed no tolerance to Buddhism or Jainism, whereas the Sangam age was one of profound religious peace, unmarred by unseemly rivalry and characterised by the co-operation in the literary field of Jains and Buddhists with the followers of Brahmanism. Therefore the *first theory* is untenable. The view that the fifth century was the Sangam period is the result of the misinterpretation of Samudragupta's Pillar inscription so as to extend his southern invasion to Kerala, of the wrong indentification of Mantaraja mentioned in that record with Mantaram Cheral of Sangam Literature, and of the untenable equation of the *vambamoriyar* with Neo-Mauryas or Guptas. Another apparent prop to this theory is the mention in the Buddhist Tamil epic, the *Manimekhalai*, of *kuchchara kudigai*, taken to mean a Gurjara building. But this expression need not signify anything other than a rock-cut cave. The main pillar of the view is demolished by the current reading and interpretation of the epigraph of Samudragupta, confining his southern martial career to the *region north* of Kanchi. The third theory is best supported and widely accepted. It rests on the synchronism of Senguttuvan Chera with Gajabahu of Ceylon. The *Silappadikaram* describes the installation of the image of Pattinidevi by Senguttuvan, which function was graced by that Ceylon ruler. This synchronism is confirmed by the literary and artistic traditions of Ceylon. In the light of the *Mahavamsa*, Gajabahu (No. 39 of the list of Ceylon kings) may be placed in A.D. 173-195, or 177-199. The next Gajabahu (No. 126) belongs to the first half of the twelfth century

A.D. Therefore Senguttuvan's contemporary must have been Gajabahu I, living in the latter half of the second century A.D. Among the Cheras of the Sangam age, the former occupies chronologically a middle position. Therefore the first three centuries A.D. may be regarded as the Sangam period of Tamil history. This conclusion is in perfect harmony with the data relating to the Tamil kingdoms supplied by the classical authors of the first and second centuries A.D. and by the remarkable finds in South India of Roman coins of the early imperial period.*

Karikala Chola. The legends, Tamil and Telugu, of Karikala or Black Leg, though more extensive than his sober history, may be said to reflect his fame as the greatest Chola of the Sangam age. His foremost achievement was the defeat of his Chera and Pandya contemporaries, backed up by as many as eleven chieftains, at Venni (Kovilvenni near Tanjore). His other victories have been celebrated by poets, but his kingdom does not seem to have

Senguttuvan Chera. With Karikala's death and the subsequent internal troubles in the Chola kingdom, the primacy among the Tamil states passed on to Senguttuvan Chera or the Red-Chera, the most distinguished among the Cheras. He is in reality the here of the *Silappadikaram*, composed by his brother. His Northern Indian achievements may be dismissed as mythical. But he was a great soldier who triumphed over many chieftains. He is said to have won naval victories as well; by repressing piracy he seems to have ensured the safety of the great port, Musiri or Cranganore. He interfered with effect in the Chola war of succession and kept the Pandyas in their place. He is said to have reigned for more than fifty years, patronising literature and the orthodox and heterodox religions. His dedication of a temple to Pattinidevi was the occasion for a great gathering of princes including Gajabahu I of Ceylon. It is wrong to suppose that the rule of succession among the Cheras of the age was from uncle to nephew, instead of from father to son. The language of the country was Tamil, Malayalam evolving only later. The capital was Vanji or Tiruvanjikalam, suburb of Cranganore, - though a few scholars would identify it with Karur (Trichinopoly District). No doubt, *Vanji* was also called Karuvur, and Ptolemy (A.D. 150) speaks of Karoura as the capital of Kerala. But Pliny and the author of the *Periplus* (first century A.D.) mention Muziris or Cranganore as the Chera metropolis. Ptolemy's Karoura may be identified with Karuvapatana between Cranganore and Irinjnalakuda (Cochin State). No doubt Karur in the Trichinopoly District was the bone of contention among the three chief powers of the Tamil land, and sometimes it was held by the Cheras, but it was never their capital.* There were two branches of the royal family at Vanji and Tondi, and

* Sesha Aiyar, *op. cit.*, Chapter VI; Krishnaswami Aiyangar, *Seran Vanji* (1940), pp. 86 and 104-8.

some are inclined to add one more branch Mantaram Cheral " of the elephant look " was a later Chera of the Sangam age not the son of Senguttuvan He belonged to the Tondi branch and was a distinguished soldier though overpowered by the Talaiyalanganattu Pandyan

Nedunjeliyan Pandya Nedunjeliyan lived between the periods of Senguttuvan and Senganman Chola and was the contemporary of Mantiram Cheral he was the ablest of the Pandyas of the Sangam age who overcame the aggressive combination of the Chera the Chola and five chieftains at Talaivalanganam (Talaiyalamkadu Tanjore District) Though he won other victories he is enshrined in Tamil Literature as the Talaiyalanganattu Pandyan He performed a sacrifice and patronised Brahmanism He was a generous patron of poets he contributed much to the glory of the third Sangam Madura was his political and literary capital and Korkai the chief sea port of the kingdom The Pandya hegemony established by him remained intact till the rise of the Pallavas

SECTION XII ADMINISTRATION

Foreign Influence The half millennium under survey is characterised by the introduction of new ideas into administration owing to the conquest of large parts of Northern and Western India by foreigners It is the period *par excellence* of non Indian dynasties though South India was mostly under indigenous rule The Satavahanas were to some extent affected by their constant contact with the Saka states in Maharashtra and Malva The independent Tamil country was free from such influences But even in regions under foreign *domination*

some development of administrative machinery, anticipative of the Gupta age. The republics of North-Western India and Rajputana suffered at the hands of foreign rulers and Indian dynasts, and were in constant conflict with them, but the extinction of those institutions belongs to a later period. The Greek experiment of autonomous cities was of limited scope and could not succeed in an age of dynastic aggression and racial conflict.

Monarchy in Northern India. Unlike Asoka, the kings of this period assumed sounding imperial titles like *Rajadhiraja* (Iranian), *Dharmamaharaja* and *Chakravarti*, and Kanishka describes himself as *Devaputra* (Chinese) and *Kaisar* (Roman). To a small extent the titles of queens changed, and they blossomed into *Mahadevis*, whereas Asoka's wives had been only *Devis*. It was the fashion to erect royal statues and even temples to kings; here Roman influence is again perceptible. Joint rule of the king and one of his relatives prevailed here and there, especially among the Greeks, Sakas and Pahlavas. The *Yuvaraja* or heir-apparent rose gradually in influence and importance. We have mentioned the system of Kshatrapas and Mahakshatrapas. There were major officers with Greek designations—*Meridarch* (District Officer) and *Strategos* (Military Governor) corresponding perhaps to *Amatya* and *Mahasenapati*. Provincial governors of the military type existed under the Satavahanas, and their close connection with the rulers, sometimes matrimonial, increased their power, and in due course they contributed to the dismemberment of the empire. The District was called *rashtra*, *ahara* or *desa*, and its official head, *Rashtrapati*, *Amatya* or *Desadhikrit* respectively. The lowest units of the administration were the *grama* and the *nigama* (village and town).

Tamil Kingship. The Sangam Literature proper gives us an idea of Tamil kingship, perhaps not much divorced from reality, though the *Kural* of Tiruvalluvar draws an idealised picture. The system of hereditary monarchy

mitra's religious impulse seems to have had far-reaching consequences. South India under the Satavahanas and the Tamil rulers paid special attention to the glorification of the orthodox religion by the performance on many occasions of Vedic sacrifices in a grand manner, without adopting a truculent attitude towards Buddhism or Jainism. What gave further strength to orthodox Brahmanism was an apparent compromise with Saivism and Vaishnavism which brought the two latter into the pale of orthodoxy. We have seen that the Besnagar column is evidence of the appeal of Vaishnavism to the Greeks. An inscription near Udaipur (Rajputana) of about 150 B.C. mentions a temple of Vasudeva. Saivism secured the allegiance of Kadphises II and Vasudeva. But foreigners were more attracted to Buddhism, though as rulers they encouraged the religions of their principalities; for example, Nahapana and Ushavadata. The latter's extensive charities to Brahmans and Buddhists are recorded in his Nasik inscriptions. Rudradaman I as well as his successors became completely Hinduised and entered into matrimonial relations with the Satavahanas and the Ikshvakus. There is a Syrian tradition vouching for the existence of the Krishna cult in Armenia in the second century B.C.

Buddhism. Though Buddhism lost its position in Eastern India, it won vital triumphs in the conversion of Menander and Kanishka. The growth of the Mahayana was conducive to the wide extension of Buddhism. In due course, Central Asia and China came under its influence. The Satavahanas were great patrons of Buddhism in the Andhradesa and Maharashtra. Inscriptions at Amaravati and Nagarjunikonda mention several Buddhist sects and costly donations by a number of ladies. The Amaravati sculptures depict their participation in the proceedings of assemblies, their listening to a disputation, the audience belonging mostly to their sex, and their wearing head-dress, but with their noses unadorned.

It is clear that women occupied a conspicuous position in society * Some scholars object to the view that Nagarjuna was connected with Nagarjunikonda but Chinese and Tibetan evidences go against their objection Therefore the Madhyamika philosophy originated in the Andhradesa The first and second centuries A D witnessed the greatest glory of Buddhism in the Western Dakhan *viz* Nasik Junnar Ajanta Kanheri etc Gautamiputra Satakarni and his son Pulumayi were active patrons of that religion Like their Andhra sisters the ladies of Maharashtra were prominent in making gifts founding houses of worship etc As regards the Tamil country that in it Buddhism was in a flourishing condition during the first three Christian centuries is borne out by the Sangam Literature The *Silappadikaram* mentions the Buddha the Indravihara at Kaverpatnam etc but its references to Buddhism are not many while the *Manimekhalai* of Sittalai Sattanar is a Buddhist epic based on the *Sankhajataka* The girl Manimekhalai became a nun under the tutelage of Aravana Adigal and the work gives a clear exposition of *karma sila dana trisatna* the Four Truths and the twelve *nidanas* and of *avidya* as the real cause of human unhappiness Therefore the Buddhism of the *Manimekhalai* is Hinayanism †

Jainism Like Buddhism Jainism ceased to be dominant in the Middle Country but Kharavela of Kalinga championed its cause and played the part to some extent of a Jain Asoka It was firmly established at Mathura and Ujjain About A D 79 its followers became permanently divided into Svetambaras and Digambaras the former alone having the Order of nuns In the Sangam age Jainism was important in the Tamil land but next only to Brahmanism The Jews and Christians

* K Gopalachari *Early History of the Andhra Country* (1941) pp 9 99

† Krishnaswami Aiyangar (Law *Buddhistic Studies* pp 11 and 13)

immigrated into Malabar in the early centuries of the Christian era.

SECTION XIV. ECONOMIC CONDITION

Industry. The guild organisation of industry made further progress in this period. Inscriptions refer to the corporations of weavers, potters, manufacturers of oil, ivory workers, braziers, bamboo workers, and makers of hydraulic machines. A Nasik record of Usavadata mentions his permanent deposit of 3,000 *kahapanas* in two guilds of weavers, the interest on which at twelve and nine per cent per annum was intended for the use of Buddhist monks as "cloth money and money for outside life." Another inscription in the same place makes provision for medical aid to monks by perpetual deposits in other guilds. This banking function of the guilds is a remarkable feature of their development. Charities in their name or by foremen of guilds are on record. A telling instance of mobility of labour is found in the *Manimekhalai;* the palace at Puhar was built by Magadhan artisans, Maratha mechanics, Malwa smiths and Yavana carpenters in co-operation with the Tamils. The chief industry of the Tamil land, the products of which were much appreciated in the West, was the weaving of cotton, and Indian muslins are described by Petronius as "webs of woven wind" and by Tamil poets as "the sloughs of *serpents.*" The other economic activities of India will be clear from her exports to foreign countries.

Sea-Ports. The *Periplus* (A.D. 60) and Ptolemy's *Geography* (A.D. 150) give a full description of the sea-ports and other centres of commercial activity. Beginning with North-Western India, the chief places mentioned in those works are as follows: Barbaricon (Bahardipur) at the mouth of the Indus; Barygaza (Broach) controlled the traffic of and through North-Western India, of Minnagara and Ujjain, and of Paithan and Ter; Tyndis (Kadalundi or Ponnani); Muziris (Cranganore); Nel-

cynda (Kottayam), Bacare (Porakad), Comari (Cape Comorin), Colchoi (Korkai), Nicama (Negapatam), Camara (Kaveripatnam), Poduce (Pondicherry?), Sopatma (Marakanam, South Arcot Dt), Masalia (Masulipatam), Dosarene (in Orissa), and Gange (Tamluk?)

Exports and Imports The exports from India may be divided into (*a*) Animals and animal products (*b*) Plant products and (*c*) Mineral products* (*a*) A few female slaves, eunuchs, elephant drivers, cooks and prostitutes, a limited number of lions leopards, monkeys tigers dogs, rhinoceroses and elephants, parrots, and perhaps peacocks and pythons, hides and furs ghee, wool of the shawl goat (from Kashmir and the Himalayas), musk, horns of the rhinoceros ivory (the best variety from Orissa), tortoise shell, pearls (from the Pandya and Chola kingdoms), conch shells silk (Chinese and Indian) etc, of these pearls, ivory and parrots had the highest demand (*b*) Pepper (from Malabar and Travancore), called in Sanskrit *yavanapriya* or "beloved of the Greeks" chiefly the black variety and also white pepper and long pepper, ginger, cardamom (from Malabar and Travancore), cinnamon (from the Himalayas and inferior variety from Malabar), called *malabathrum* by the Greeks and Romans, spikenard oil (from the Himalayas) costus root (from Kashmir), garlands, Malabar tallow, indigo, lycium (from the Himalayas), gingelly, cane-sugar, muslins (from Gujarat, the Chola country, Masulipatam and Dacca the last place producing the finest quality) and raw cotton, ebony teak (Travancore Malabar, Kanara and Gujarat) rosewood sandal wood (Mysore Coimbatore and Salem), aloes wood cocoanut, Malabar plantains, melons, rice etc the most important of these exports were pepper muslins cinnamon, spikenard, costus teak and rice (*c*) Diamond; various kinds of quartz, sapphire ruby beryl (from

* E H Warmington *The Commerce between the Roman Empire and India* (1928), Part II

Coimbatore, Salem and Mysore); asbestos; iron and steel, etc. The chief imports into India were slaves (including beautiful Greek singing girls), coral, linen, wine, lead, copper, tin, vases, lamps and glass.

Indo-Roman Trade. The trade of Rome with India commenced under favourable auspices in the time of Augustus, who received embassies between 25 and 11 B.C. from North-Western India, Western India, and the Chera and Pandya kingdoms. By about A.D. 50, Western sailors had learnt that direct voyages to Malabar could be made in a shorter time than in the case of the old route along the West Coast of India, and ancient tradition attributed this discovery to "Hippalos." Consequently trade became more active, though it took nearly four months in good weather to cover the distance from Rome to this country. Roman subjects resided permanently in the great commercial centres of India, and there was a temple of Augustus at Cranganore. The trade was prosperous throughout the first and second centuries A.D. Roman gold and silver coins have been found in large quantities in the Coimbatore District, Travancore and Pudukkottai State, and to a small extent in other parts of India. *In a Greek farce of the second century A.D.*, discovered in 1899 at Oxyrhynchus, Egypt, Old Kannada passages occur, and the scene of action appears to be in the vicinity of Malpe, near Udipi (South Kanara District).* The substantial adverse balance of trade for Rome resulted in the transfer of gold coins to India. Pliny notes that India drained Roman wealth to the extent of fifty-five million *sesterces* (about £600,000) every year in return for luxuries, which were sold to the consumers for many times their Indian prices. Petronius, Seneca and Pliny thundered against the Roman use of pearls,

* B. A. Saletore, *Ancient Karnataka*, I (1936), Appendix A; S. Srikantha Sastri, *Sources of Karnataka History*, I (1940), pp. 5-9.

ivory and muslins and even of pepper, and blamed the ladies in particular Lollia Paulina the Queen of Gaius wore pearls and precious stones worth forty million sesterces at an ordinary marriage festivity Nero decked his shoes with pearls Even Seneca the moralist who condemned the luxury of the age possessed five hundred tables with ivory legs Persons were not wanting who wore only silk bathed in spikenard oil and consumed the flesh of parrots serving it to their pet animals The success of the commercial activity of Rome was due to its imperial organisation and to the honesty of her merchants Though it was a grand achievement the resulting economic drain speeded up the financial collapse of the Roman Empire

India s Commercial Greatness Though the commercial intercourse with Rome contributed to the wealth and prosperity of India it was only a part of her wider activity in foreign trade Many Far Eastern products reached Rome through India Hence in studying the exports of India we should distinguish between indigenous and foreign items She was the centre of the commercial world extending from Spain to China including Malayasia and maintained close contact with Arabia Persia Central Asia China Malava and the Archipelago and her trade relations constituted the foundation of her colonising effort in South Eastern Asia

SECTION XV SOCIAL LIFE

Indianisation of Foreigners We have observed the rapid Indianisation of the foreign invaders who established their rule in Northern and Western India The caste system should have been sufficiently elastic to accommodate them in Indian Society The tendency of the *bhakti* cult to pass over caste barriers evidenced by the Besnagar inscription cannot be overlooked After the absorption of the foreigners into the social polity we find emphasis laid on the four *varnas* as in the *Bhagavad Gita*

and rulers like Gautamiputra Satakarni proclaimed their resolve to preserve the purity of castes. Though the foreigners were Indianised, they could not give up their old social practices. The Scythian custom of *sati* must have been supported by the barbarian invaders, and they must have encouraged stitched clothes, which were no doubt known in the age of the Buddha; for example, the bodice. The exposure of the breasts of women by artists was intended to heighten the artistic effect, and cannot favour the theory of inadequate and indecent dressing.

Vatsyayana. The complaint of the Pauranikas that there was a debasement of the moral currency consequent on the foreign invasions seems to be well founded. We have seen that the age, in spite of its aggressive militarism and racial conflict, was one of great material progress. In such an environment social stability required an ideal of human conduct not far removed from the practicable, and Vatsyayana emphasises attention to all the three *purusharthas* (objects of man's endeavour)—*dharma*, *artha*, and *kama*—with a view to the attainment of the ultimate end of human effort—*moksha*. From our point of view, his stress on the satisfaction of human desires, without detriment to *Dharma* or morality, makes him the exponent of a reasonable social ideal divorced from the incurable puritanism of the Dharmasastrakaras. Though he has been called "the Machiavelli of erotics" and bracketed with Kautilya, their points of view are different. While the Arthasastrakara recommends the adoption of questionable methods to reach the goal, Vatsyayana, the author of the *Kama Sutra*, condemns unhealthy and immoral practices, though he describes them in order to make his treatise on love complete. In the field of sex, he anticipates in some respects the views of the present century, though his anatomy and physiology may not be all right, and though some of his prescriptions may smack of the medicine-man's recipe. He mentions a

number of his predecessors and acknowledges his indebtedness to them. He is a liberal social thinker who never loses sight of the realities of life. He never quarrels with human nature, but fights against its perversion. Some would identify him with Kautilya, who had the alternative name Vatsyayana He resembles Kautilya in some respects, but not enough to suggest his identity with him, even granting that the chronological difficulty may be adjusted. The *Kama Sutra* is the first scientific work on sex, a subject dealt with scientifically in the West only in the present century.

Date. Vatsyayana mentions Kuntala Satakarni, the thirteenth Andhra king of the Puranic list who lived towards the close of the first century B C., and Kottaraja, an Abhira king On the ground that the Abhiras were powerful rulers in Western India in the 3rd century A D. the Kamasutrakara is assigned to that century * Regarding Kuntala Satakarni as a contemporary of Vatsyayana, some would place the latter in the beginning of the first century A.D., while there are others who are inclined to assign him to the 4th century A.D. on the untenable ground that Kautilya belonged to the 3rd century A D. and that an interval of one century should be allowed between him and the Kamasutrakara. There is practically no doubt that he lived in the early centuries of the Christian era, and the 3rd century A.D. is the best working hypothesis.

Description of India. Vatsyayana's account of *desyopacharas* or local customs is interesting, and shows to some extent the adverse effect of foreign invasion on morality. The Madhyadesa is described as the home of clean habits, in which even kissing was regarded as a dirty practice, and Eastern India, as even purer, their people being considered as *sishtas* (of most decent habits). Saketa, Mathura and the Panjab are condemned. The

* H. C. Chakladar, *Social Life in Ancient India* (1929), Chapter I.

women of Bactria were on the whole of decent habits, but practised polyandry and reduced their husbands to the status of ladies in a harem. Such customs prevailed in the neighbouring regions as well—Strirajya and Gramanari-Vishaya. In Sindh, Kathiawar, Gujarat, North Konkan and Vidarbha irregularities prevailed in the royal harem. The characteristics of Malwa, Maratha and Andhra ladies are enumerated. The Dakshinatyas or South Indians are mentioned as marrying the daughters of their maternal uncles and said to practise something like circumcision. Dangerous practices are illustrated by tragedies connected with Kuntala Satakarni, a Chola king, and a Pandya commander-in-chief. Because Vatsyayana is detailed in his description of Western India and because he frequently quotes Apastamba, it is thought that, like the latter, he belonged to that part of India though some would regard Pataliputra as his home.

Marriage. Vatsyayana insists upon young men marrying their equals in social status with a view to happiness, after completing their education and acquiring an adequate knowledge of the science of love. His list of qualifications and defects of brides is to some extent laughable, as he is against the choice of a girl as bride whose name is that of a river or a *nakshatra* (star). His classifications are sometimes too artificial. But he lived in ancient India and inherited many old-world ideas and superstitions. Even the greatest man of a particular age can rise above its ideas only to a limited extent. Vatsyayana concludes that a man will be happy, if he marries "*the woman on* whom his heart and his eye are set." He would tolerate a disparity of three to seven years in the ages of the husband and wife and no more, while the *Dharmasastrakaras* allow a man of thirty to marry a girl of ten or twelve. He contemplates pre-puberty and post-puberty marriages. He mentions the eight *kinds of* marriage described in the law-books and regards the *gandharva* form as the best because it is based on love.

The Nagaraka. Vatsyayana's *nagaraka* or man about town is his ideal of a cultured and fashionable gentleman. He describes his house, his daily life, his club activities, etc. In one respect, he is old-fashioned from our point of view; he shaves only twice a week. In short, his life is one of well-regulated wordly pleasure Though he is an educated man with literary and aesthetic taste, his wife is only an ideal housewife with some amount of literacy and knowledge of the world. Remarriage of widows is permitted by Vatsyayana in cases of necessity, but the *punarbhu* (remarried woman) did not enjoy the social status of a wife. *Ganikas* or public women of the intellectual and refined type, whose accomplishments were appreciated by good husbands, came into intimate social contact with them without offending public taste. Public opinion generously tolerated their activities and welcomed their charities and benefactions, without however justifying their private lives.

him, and the Bhasa theory has divided scholars. He was a Vaishnava drawing the materials for his dramas from the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*. His greatest play is the *Svapnavasavadatta*, and Kalidasa refers to him as his famous predecessor. Patanjali, the great grammarian, criticises the works of Panini and Katyayana, defends Panini generally against Katyayana, and occasionally finds fault with Panini. He completes the development of his science, and his *Mahabhashya* is regarded as the model commentary written in simple and lucid prose. The *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* assumed final shape towards the close of this epoch. The *Dharmasastra* from Manu must be assigned to the period, 200 B.C. to A.D. 200, and its fame gradually spread throughout India and in the Indian colonies of South-Eastern Asia. The next Smritikara, Yajnavalkya, seems to have lived in the 3rd century A.D. We have already assigned Vatsyayana, the Kamasutrakara, to the same century. The *Natya-sastra* of Bharata relating to the theatrical art belongs to the 2nd or 3rd century A.D. The *Yoga*, *Nyaya* and *Vaiseshika Sutras*, composed by Patanjali, Gautama and Kanada respectively, are to be assigned to the period under review, though some would ascribe to it the composition of all the philosophical *Sutras*. A few scholars identify the Yogasutrakara with the Mahabhashyakara, and the Nyayabhashyakara Vatsyayana with the Kamasutrakara, but these views are generally rejected. Medical literature was enriched by Charaka and Susruta, who lived in the early centuries of the Christian era and who along with Vagbhata of the 7th century A.D., constitute the medical trio. Charaka was patronised by Kanishka, and his *Samhita* dealing with the eight "limbs" of medicine is the greatest authority on the subject. He was not only a doctor, but a scholar well-versed in many *sastras*. His work became popular later in Persia and Arabia. The *Susruta Samhita*, devoted to surgery, mentions a large variety of surgical instruments; its fame spread in Arabia and Cambodia. Though widows and

the poor are recommended for free treatment, it is curious that medical aid is denied to sinners, hunters, etc The treatises of Charaka and Susruta are free from Greek influence, the alleged indebtedness to Hippocrates the father of ancient Greek medicine, is untenable because the theory of *tridosha* or "three humours" is an old Indian doctrine A work on astrology, the *Garga Samhita*, exhibits no Greek influence, and the historical value of its *Yugapurana* section has been indicated

Buddhist Literature The cannonical literature of Hinayana Buddhism was almost completed in the third century B C The most important Pali work belonging most probably to the first century A D is the *Milindapanha* or *Questions of Milinda* (Menander), a philosophical work in the form of question and answer, the leading figures being Menander and Nagasena, a Buddhist monk It is "a masterpiece of ancient Indian prose," and its dialogues are similar to those of Plato and of the *Upanishads* and the Pali Canon Dr Tarn's theory of its Greek origin is negatived by its lack of knowledge of the Greek language or thought Buddhaghosha regards it as an authority not inferior to the Pali Canon The bearing of this work on the Bactrian king's conversion to Buddhism has been noted Sanskrit was the adopted language of Mahayanism The *Saddharmapundarika* outlines the doctrines of Mahayana and develops the conception of the Buddha as the great god It was produced probably in the first century A D, and its characteristics are *Buddhabhakti* verbosity, Puranic extravagance and bibliolatry Asvaghosha is the greatest writer of the second century A D taking his whole literary activity into account He belonged to Ayodhya, Benares or Patna His *Buddhacharita* is a *mahakavya* and its sequel is the *Sundarananda kavya*, which narrates the story of Sundari and Nanda (the Buddha's half brother), and of the latter's reluctant entry into the Sangha In the main both works teach Mahayanism He wrote a drama called the *Sari-*

putra-prakarana and two others of the allegorical and *hetaera* or courtesan types; the *prakarana*, whose fragments alone are extant, deals with the conversion of Sariputta and Moggallana. His Mahayanist treatise is the *Mahayanasraddhotpada* or Rise of the Mahayana Faith. Lastly, his *Vajrasuchi*, or Diamond Needle, is an effective refutation of the caste system by quotations from the *Vedas*, the *Mahabharata* and the *Manavadharmasastra;* its doctrine of equality astonished democratic Europe in the nineteenth century. His fame is unique in the field of letters; it is said that "in his richness and variety he recalls Milton, Goethe, Kant and Voltaire."* He was the great predecessor of Kalidasa, who was to some extent influenced by him. Nagarjuna was a South Indian Brahman, who became a Buddhist and subsequently the founder of the Madhyamika school of Buddhism. He composed the *Madhyamika Sutras*, and his *sunyavada* shows the utter unreality of the phenomenal world and anticipates Bradley's *Appearance* and *Reality;* he distinguishes between relative and absolute truth and affirms that *sunyata* is the highest truth. His teaching influenced Vedantins like Sankara, who however condemns nihilism. As a controversialist and philosopher, Nagarjuna was the greatest personality in the second century A.D. This pillar of Mahayanism was an Andhra by birth or domicile. "a man of remarkable genius, an almost universal scholar,....a profound philosopher, a poet and author of great literary abilities, and an intense lover of his species."* In spite of his *sunyavada*, Bodhisattva Nagarjuna favoured worship and devotion, and his *Suhrillekha*, or Letter to a Friend, emphasises the Four Truths and the Eight-fold Path, and contains the dictum that "we should not make any distinction between friends and enemies." His doctrines were defended by his famous pupil Aryadeva. In spite of the increasing importance

* T. Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India* (1904), II. p. 203.

of Sanskrit, a few great Prakrit works were composed during this period We have mentioned Hala's work on love A much greater production is the *Brihatkatha* of Gunadhya the loss of which has been to some extent compensated by the Sanskrit versions of Kashmirian authors it is a store house of stories utilised later by many men of letters

Art Cave Architecture and Sculpture The rock cut *vihara* (monastery) at Bhaja (near Poona) contains the earliest sculpture of the period—early second century B C though some would assign it to the next century—characterised by realism and uninfluenced by ethical or spiritual considerations The greatest of the rock hewn *chaityas* (temples) with its grand hall at Karle (near Bombay) is much later belonging probably to the close of the first century B C it is "one of the most magnificent monuments in all India" * There are *chaitya* halls at Junnar Nasik Ajanta and other places The facade of the *chaitya* hall at Nasik is characterised by restrained decoration The *vihara* with an inscription of Usavadata belongs to the second century A D To the same period is to be assigned the *chaitya* hall at Kanheri (near Bombay) Many caves were excavated for the Jains in Orissa Thus cave architecture and sculpture made greater progress than in the period of Asoka

Bharhut and Sanchi Stupas The Bharhut *stupa* (about 150 B C) is famous for its sculptured gateway and railings illustrative of the Buddha's life for example the story of the Deer Bodhisattva narrated in the *Ruru Jataka* The Bodh Gaya railing (about 100 B C) is another example of the art of the Sunga age The four gateways of the Sanchi *stupa* "the most perfect and most beautiful of all the monuments of the Early

* A K Coomaraswamy *History of Indian and Indonesian Art* (1927) p 29

School "* of Indian art, are assigned to the latter half of the first century B.C. Here again we find bas-reliefs illustrating the *Jataka* stories of the Buddha, who is represented by a symbol, not by his figure, and the Great Departure from Kapilavastu. "By the side of these mature and elaborate compositions the reliefs of Bharhut are stiff and awkward, and we are conscious of the gulf which separates the two and of the great advance that sculpture must have made during the century or more that elapsed between them."† Still both belong to the Central Indian or National School. Their art is characterised by skilful reproduction of Nature; avoidance of the image of the Buddha, and his representation by a parasol, footprints, etc., and the four principal events of his life by the lotus, the Bodhi tree, the wheel, and the *stupa;* synoptic method of illustration; and reliefs with explanatory legends and the names of donors, indicative of their character as the offspring of co-operative effort. There is substantial improvement in the minor arts—terracotta work and metal ornaments. The Gudimallam (North Arcot District) *Sivalingam* is said to belong to the second or first century B.C. Pre-Christian Indian painting is found at Ajanta (the Nizam's State) and Jogimara (Orissa).

Gandhara Sculpture. The home of the Gandhara school of sculpture is the territory dominated by Peshawar, and its best productions may be assigned to A.D. 50—200, the Kushan period. This sculpture is Buddhist, and the characteristic works are statues and reliefs. "Considered as pictures of human life they represent as in a mirror a vivid image of almost every phase of the life of Northern India, lay and clerical, during several centuries....Every class of the population from prince to pariah is represented, and in short, no subject of human interest was regarded as material

* *C.H.I.*, I, p. 627.
† *Ibid.*, p. 632.

unsuitable for the sculptor's chisel "* Various types of the Buddha image were produced—the prince, the ascetic with only his skeleton intact (the emaciated Buddha characterised by "gripping realism"), the Enlightened, etc The reliefs depict his birth, his renunciation, his temptation, etc Figures of Kubera and others mentioned in Buddhist Literature were made and subordinated to the main theme—the Buddha's life Thus the Gandhara sculpture is unique as far as India is concerned, and Greek influence is patent though the subject is Indian That influence substantially changed the *stupa*, which itself was decorated the stone balustrade and gateways of Central India are conspicuously absent, *Jataka* scenes are rare, the Greek contributions are the drapery, the nimbus round the head and the features of Apollo or Dionysus, the Corinthian capital, the acanthus the vine leaf, the merman, etc But gradually non Indian elements were eliminated Therefore the influence of the Gandhara school on Indian art in general is very limited Though the hybrid art of Gandhara exhibits much creative power, workmanship, symmetry and restraint, it produced very few works of distinguished merit

Mathura At Mathura the progress of art corresponds to that of Bharhut till the advent of the Satraps, and then decline sets in and continues till the Kushan period Though the Mathura school developed on indigenous lines, the influence of Gandhara sculpture was exerted on it in the Kushan period To the first two centuries A D belong the railing pillars representing ladies in various attitudes, oppressively sensual and out of tune with the austere morality of Buddhism

Amaravati and Nagarjunikonda The Amaravati (Guntur District) *stupa* may be assigned to about 200 B C, but the great railing with its sculpture is later—A D

* Smith A History of Fine Arts in India and Ceylon (1930), pp 56 57

150-250. Here again the life of the Buddha is depicted in stone. The Descent of the Bodhisattva (birth of the Buddha) is superior to the productions of Bharhut and Gandhara. The Buddha's encounter with the elephant Nalagiri is expressive of pathos, which is absent from the art of Central India and Gandhara. The chief events of the Buddha's life are illustrated in an original manner, and Mara's seductive daughters replace the demons. The Buddha is represented by figures and symbols. The conversion of Nanda depicts him and his beautiful bride, and his reluctant progress to the monastery. The Amaravati edifice is among "the greater and most beautiful monuments of Indian Buddhism."* The sculptures of Nagarjunikonda depict the life of the Buddha and several *Jatakas*. The treatment of the first sermon is original: the presence of a Scythian warrior with helmet and spear is surprising. The Nagarjunikonda phase of Amaravati art is "perhaps less perfect and refined, but still full of life and inspiration";† it influenced the art of Anuradhapura and other places in Ceylon.

Ajanta Painting. The cave paintings at Ajanta belong to different ages and constitute "the most important mass of ancient painting extant in the world, Pompeii only excepted."‡ The earliest group assigned to the first century B.C. in caves IX and X may be attributed to the patronage of the Satavahanas. The seated woman and the elephants are worthy of note.

Foreign Influence. Barring Gandhara art, Indian art from the third century B.C. to the third century A.D. was to some extent subjected to Persian and Greek influences. Still "the artists of early India were quick with the versatility of all great artists to profit by the

* J. Ph. Vogel, *Buddhist Art in India, Ceylon and Java* (1936), p. 38.

† Ibid., p. 47.

‡ Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

lessons which others had to teach them The art which they practised was essentially a national art, having its root in the heart and in the faith of the people, and giving eloquent expression to their spiritual beliefs and to their deep and intuitive sympathy with nature Hellenistic art never took a real and lasting hold upon India for the reason that the temperaments of the two peoples were radically dissimilar To the Greek, man, man's beauty, man's intellect were everything But these ideals awakened no response in the Indian mind Where Greek thought was ethical, his was spiritual where Greek was rational, his was emotional And to these higher aspirations these more spiritual instincts he sought at a later date, to give articulate expression by translating them into terms of form and colour But that was not until the more spacious times of the Guptas "*

Coinage. Punch marked and Die struck The oldest coinage of India is represented by a few silver bars with three circular dots or with devices punched on one side, but all over India are found "punch marked" coins or *puranas* in rectangular and circular forms cut from leaves of silver, with a few devices on the obverse and in some cases on both sides Taken together the devices range from human and animal figures to religious and planetary symbols These coins which may be assigned to the period 600 to 200 B C, continued in circulation even later, particularly in South India Therefore the invasion of India by Alexander the Great had no influence on Indian coinage though an Indian prince Saubhuti imitated the Greek example and struck a silver coin Casting of copper coins was practised in India from the fifth century to the third century B C Die struck coins came into existence in North Western India towards the close of the fourth century B C with devices like the *svastika*, *bodhi tree* or *vihara* "Double-die" coins,

* *CHI* I pp 644 and 649

again of North-Western India, are better and show Iranian influence, though devices like the bull and the elephant are Indian. But the Mitra coins of the second and first centuries B.C., with the names of ten kings (Sunga) in Brahmi script and the Mathura coins with twelve royal names, though double-die-struck, are free from foreign influence. The coins of Malwa illustrate the transition from "punch-marked" to die-struck coinage. Thus a system of coinage originated in India and evolved on indigenous lines till Greek contact in the second century B.C. and the following centuries improved and enriched it.*

Indo Greek coinage supplies an excellent example of cultural assimilation, the exclusively Hellenistic features of Bactrian coinage were gradually modified by the introduction of Indian elements It shows that the engravers were no mere slavish copyists of Western models, but were giving free and spontaneous expression to their own ideas "*

Saka and Pahlava The copper coins of Maues show Greek gods and goddesses and the elephant's head in imitation of a certain coin of Demetrios; on one coin, he is seated on horse back In the silver and copper coins of Azes I, Lakshmi is found along with Greek gods and goddesses, and on one copper piece he is seated cross legged The name Vonones is found along with that of his brother or his nephew Gondophernes appears on horse back on the obverse of his billon (alloy of silver and copper) coins, while on the reverse sometimes Siva is found The Indian *strategos* Aspavarman's name is found on the coins of both Azes I and Gondophernes indicating the connection between the Saka and Pahlava rulers The re striking of the coins of Apollodotos and Hippostratos by Azes I shows the Saka conquest of the Indo Greek kingdom The bilingual fashion was continued by the Sakas and the Pahlavas Nahapana and Chashtana imitated the Greek *hemidrachm*, and used Greek on the obverse, and Kharoshthi and Nagari (modified Brahmi) on the reverse After the death of Chashtana Kharoshthi drops out, and his descendants used the Buddhist *chaitya* symbol on the reverse and their portraits characteristically Saka on the obverse of their *hemidrachms* From the reign of Jivadaman (2nd half of the 2nd century A D) the grandson of Rudradaman I the date of issue is given invariably down to the end of the dynasty

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* *C.H.I.*, I p 645

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Indo-Greek. The Greek coins in India have given us the names of thirty-three rulers, most of whom are unknown to other sources of history. Their characteristic features are portrait-heads and bilingual legends; most of them are circular and conform to the Persian or Indian standard of weight. The silver coins are the *didrachm* (*double drachm*) and the *hemidrachm* (*half-drachm*). Demetrios struck copper coins with legends in two scripts—Greek and Kharoshthi on the obverse and the reverse respectively. Eukratides imitated him and issued copper and silver coins, and one of his copper coins contains the figure of Zeus, who is described as the city-god of Kapisa. The coins of Apollodotos and Menander are abundant, and their circulation at Broach as late as the first century A.D., is vouched for by the *Periplus*. The portrait-heads of two queens, Agathokleia and Kalliope are found together with those of Strato I (son of the former) and Hermaios (husband of the latter). The silver coins of the Antialkidas are also numerous. In general, the portraits on the obverse are so clear and realistic that we can gain some idea of the physical characters of the Indo-Greek kings. Devices on the reverse include animals like the elephant and the bull.

* C. J. Brown, *The Coins of India* (1922), Chapter I.

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* *C.H.I.*, I, p. 645

contain the bull on the obverse and the Bactrian camel on the reverse. Khadpises II issued the double *stater*, the *stater* (*dinara* from Roman *denarius*), the quarter-*stater*, and on some of these coins he appears cross-legged on a couch, or his head or bust is found. On one coin he is seated in a chariot drawn by two horses. His copper coins represent him as standing and placing an offering on an altar. "The portrait of the king is most realistic though hardly flattering—a corpulent figure with a long heavy face and a large nose, he appears wearing the long Kushana cloak and tall 'Gilgit' boots, on his head a conical hat with streamers."* On the reverse of his coins is found Siva or his characteristic symbol. Kanishka uses corrupt Greek for his coin legends. The reverse of his gold and copper coins exhibits a variety of gods: Greek-Helios, Herakles and Selene; Hindu-Siva; Iranian-Athro, "Fire," Oado, the wind god, Ardokhsho and *Nana*; and the Buddha. On the obverse of some of his coins he is standing, and on a few of his copper coins, sitting on a throne. Huvishka's copper coin shows him seated cross-legged, seated with raised arms, reclining on a couch and riding an elephant, and on the reverse many gods appear. Siva and Nandi are characteristic of the reverse of Vasudeva's issues, and on the other side the king is standing. The coins of the successors of Vasudeva are degenerate imitations of his type and of that of Kanishka. Yaudheyas and other republican tribes imitated the copper coinage of the Kushans, just as the Kunindas and others of the Panjab had copied Greek and Saka types in the first century B.C.

Andhra and Tamil. The coins of the Andhras are found in the Krishna-Godavari Valley, North Konkan, the Central Provinces and Málwa. The earliest pieces are assigned to about 150 B.C. The metal employed is mostly potin (billon) and lead; the legends are in

* Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

Brahmi, and the devices the *chaitya*, bow and elephant Gautamiputra Satakarni restruck many of the numerous coins of Nahapana in token of his grand victory over him We have noticed the ship coins of Yajna Satakarni The earliest coins of the Tamil country are mere weights of gold with a punch mark on one side, the cup shaped padma tankas reveal punch marks on both sides and die struck coins followed Punch marked coins continued in circulation till about A D 200 During the early centuries of the Christian era Roman gold currency prevailed Some copper ship-coins seem to be imitations of Andhra types and are assigned to the 3rd century A D , the earliest Pallava coins are of this kind

Foreign Influence Obviously Indian coinage during 200 B C—A D 300 is much indebted to the Greek achievement but the process of gradual Indianisation of the foreign art is unmistakable 'A careful inspection of the successive coinages of the Indo-Greeks the Sakas and the Kushanas will show that the strongest influences of pure Greek art had passed away before the reign of Kanishka In the Kushan (Kanishkan) period the whole fabric of the coins if not entirely Indian is far more oriental than Greek After all is said the art was produced in India and must have been largely if not entirely the work of Indian craftsmen *

CHAPTER VI

THE GUPTA AGE (300—600)

SECTION I CHANDRAGUPTA I (320—c 330)

Sri Gupta and Ghatotkacha The predecessors of Maharajadhiraja Chandragupta I were Maharaja Sri Gupta and Maharaja Ghatotkacha according to the Allahabad Pillar inscription of Samudragupta and other Gupta inscriptions This distinction in political status

* *Ibid* p 38

between Chandragupta I and his predecessors may be regarded as well founded, and the latter treated as local princes of Magadha. I-tsing, the Chinese pilgrim, who travelled in India between 671 and 695 refers to Maharaja Sri Gupta as the builder of a temple "five hundred years before." This reference would assign the first known Gupta to about 195. Obviously more than a century is untenable for two rulers, as the accession of Chandragupta I took place in 320. Therefore Sri Gupta may be assigned to the last quarter of the third century and Ghatotkacha to the first two decades of the following century. I-tsing's statement may be broadly interpreted as referring to the fifth century counting back from his own time (seventh century), *i.e.*, the third century.

Chandragupta I. About Chandragupta I we know from his title of Maharajadhiraja (though a later record styles him merely Maharaja) that his position was different from that of his grandfather and father. He must have founded the Gupta era of 319—20 as he was the first imperial Gupta; the recent attempt to push back the commencement of that era to 200 is not generally appreciated.* His marriage with Kumaradevi, a Lichchhavi princess, is alluded to with so much pride and satisfaction in the records of his successors that the inference is legitimate that it must have contributed to the rise of the Guptas. As we possess neither his inscriptions nor his coins—though a few scholars would attribute some coins to him—, his imperial position is an inference from the records of others, and we are in the dark about his achievements entitling him to that position. According to the *Puranas*, the Gupta dominions included Magadha, Allahabad and Oudh, and this is generally regarded as descriptive of the kingdom of Chandragupta I, but some would take that description as referable to the time of his predecessors. The effects of the Lichchhavi matrimonial connection are estimated variously

* R. N. Dandekar, *A History of the Guptas* (1941), pp. 12 16-

by scholars Thus there is much obscurity about the activities of Chandragupta I justifying his imperial title and his foundation of an era

The Kaumudimahotsava Recently attempts have been made to throw further light on the career of the first imperial Gupta Dr K P Jayaswal has reconstructed his history in the light of the data provided by the *Kaumudimahotsava*, a Sanskrit drama regarded as the work of a lady * The story is that one Chandasena usurped the throne of Magadha and ruled with an iron hand with the support of the Lichchhavis Consequent on a popular revolt, the usurper was expelled and his dynasty abolished According to Dr Jayaswal, Samudragupta effected the restoration of his dynasty to the imperial throne of Pataliputra by his warlike career The historical value of the drama depends mainly on the validity of the identification of Chandasena with Chandragupta I, but the grounds for the identification are not adequate, though the tendency in some quarters to disparage dramatic tradition in general from the historical point of view is to be regretted †

The Mehrauli Inscription Another attempt to elucidate the imperial career of Chandragupta I is to regard him as the Chandra of the posthumous Iron Pillar inscription at Mehrauli (near Delhi) who, after his victory in Bengal, " crossed the seven mouths of the Indus, inflicted a defeat on the Bahlikas, (and) acquired the sole rule of the earth by long continued efforts of his own arms " The last words are emphasised to bring out Chandra's acquisition of an empire by self effort, though they may be regarded as merely conventional. The achievements mentioned in the record harmonise better with the con-

* K. P Jayaswal *History of India* (1933), pp 113 18

† *A Volume of Eastern and Indian Studies presented to Prof F W Thomas* (1939), pp 115 28 Dandekar *op cit*, pp 30 36

quest of the Western Satraps by Chandragupta II, on some of whose coins the shortened form of his name—Chandra—occurs.* In the light of the inscriptional data, it is not proper to identify Chandra with any petty ruler. The choice lies between Chandragupta I and II. More definite evidence is desirable before the Meharauli record is ascribed to the former. If such evidence is available, he may be regarded as the Gupta Philip and his son as the Gupta Alexander.† Recently Chandra has been identified even with Chandragupta Maurya. Hence the inscription is regarded as a mysterious record.‡

SECTION II. SAMUDRAGUPTA (*c* 330—*c* 360)

Accession. It is supposed by a few scholars that Chandraputa I was succeeded by his first son, Kacha, whose coins exist. This view is propped up by the fact recorded in the Allahabad Pillar inscription of Samudragupta that he was chosen heir-designate by his father, with the result that the rejected candidates became disconsolate, and by the supposition that that record suggests a war of succession before Samudragupta could be at ease at Pataliputra. But Kacha has no place in the official genealogy, which mentions Samudragupta as the immediate successor of Chandragupta I. Further the Kacha coins are the same as those of Samudragupta in weight, fabric and type, and the legends describe him as "the exterminator of all kings" and as the "conqueror of the world who conquers heaven by his best actions"—expressions applied to Samudragupta in other records. Therefore the identity of the two is extremely probable, and it may be surmised that Samudragupta was called Kacha, short for the name of his grandfather, Ghatotkacha; 330 is merely the conjectural date of his accession to the throne.

* *Ibid.*, pp. 23-28.

† S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, *Studies in Gupta History* (1927), p. 35.

‡ *New Indian Antiquary*, I, pp. 188-89.

The Pillar Inscription The long, undated inscription of Samudragupta in classical Sanskrit incised on an Asokan pillar probably originally at Kausambi but now at Allahabad is in the Gupta variety of the Nagari script all the 33 lines constitute a single gigantic sentence with a beautiful verse (lines 7 and 8) regarded by competent critics to be not unworthy of Kalidasa It was composed by Mahadandanayaka (Commander in Chief) Harisena It was once treated as a posthumous record of Samudragupta because the ascent of his fame to Indra's region was understood as his translation to the other world But the absence of any reference to his *asvamedha* from the epigraph is decisive proof of its composition during the life-time of Samudragupta The order in which events are mentioned cannot be taken as the chronological order Though some of the personal and place names in the record have not been identified satisfactorily the contents of the document are on the whole clear Omitting the conventional phraseology appearing here and there and refusing to underline the etceteras we may regard the inscription as thoroughly historical Upon this single record rests the name and fame of the real founder of the Gupta Empire except in the first four lines there are no serious *lacunae* in it

Samudragupta's Accomplishments The first part of the Pillar inscription describes Samudragupta as one who in his own person resolved the eternal conflict between poetry and prosperity or learning and wealth in other words he was both king-and-poet He was chosen by his father as the heir apparent on account of his real worth and the courtiers were delighted while his brothers were confounded this idea is conveyed to us in a remarkable verse in such a manner that we feel we see the whole scene with our own eyes Then his "extirpation" of Achyuta and Nagasena is described also his capture of a member of the Kota family and his residence at Pataliputra free from any anxiety This datum is inadequate for founding

upon it the theory of a disputed succession. Then his moral, intellectual and warlike qualities are detailed; his love of *dharma*, his piercing intellect, his learning (poetry) and his valour (*parakramanka*). Here is a second reference to his ability as a poet.

The Dakshinapatha Expedition. The next part of the inscription is the most important. It enumerates the conquests of Samudragupta and their effects on his imperial position. He "captured and liberated" Mahendra of Kosala, Vyaghraraja of Mahakantara, Mantaraja of Kerala, Mahendragiri of Pishtapura, Svamidatta of Kottura, Damana of Erandapalla, Vishnugopa of Kanchi, Nilaraja of Avamukta, Hastivarman of Vengi, Ugrasena of Palakka, Kubera of Devarashtra, Dhananjaya of Kusthalapura and "all the other kings of Dakshinapatha." The extent of Samudragupta's conquests in South India can be correctly determined only if those place names are properly identified. Identifying Kerala with the Chera country, Kottura with Kothur (Coimbatore District) and Palakka with Palghat (South Malabar District), it was once thought that Samudragupta's invasion covered most of South India, and Dr. Hoernle went further on the basis of the expression "all the other kings of Dakshinapatha", and described the Gupta Empire as more extensive than the Maurya Empire. But those identifications are now held to be untenable. The equation of Kerala with Colair lake (Godavari District) or Khurda Road (Orissa) is unsatisfactory. Kottura is said to be Kothoor (Ganjam District). Palakka is Pakkai (Nellore District). The identification of Erandapalla with Erandol (Khandesh District, Bombay), and of Devarashtra with Maharashtra led to the belief that Samudragupta returned home from Kanchi *via* Western India. But Erandapalla is taken as identical with Erandapali (Ganjam District) and Devarashtra with the Yellamanchili Taluk of the Vizagapatam District by Prof. Jouveau-Dubreuil, who thinks that there is no

question of the inclusion of the Maratha country within Samudragupta's sphere of operations Kosala is South Kosala Mahakantara is the neighbouring forest region and Pishtapura is Pithapuram (Godavari District), Vengi and Kanchi are obvious Avamukta and Kusthala pura must be near one of the places mentioned above in the Andhradesa Therefore Samudragupta's expedition is said to have been confined to the East Coast as far as Kanchi puram But the author's view is that Samudragupta marched through the E Godavari W Godavari Krishna and Nellore Districts and returned home *via* the Satara and Mandla Districts* Prof Jouveau Dubreuil thinks that the alleged liberation of South Indian potentates means in plain language the defeat of Samudragupta, probably by a confederacy of princes and observes "It is no more a new Alexander marching victoriously through South India, it was simply the unfortunate attempt of a king from the North who wanted to annex the coast of Orissa but completely failed'† The French scholar imagines that Samudragupta was no boy catching butterflies and setting them free But the reinstatement of conquered kings was not at all novel even Alexander treated Poros generously in the end The Pillar inscription distinguishes clearly between "extirpation" and "liberation'—two different policies pursued by Samudragupta with regard to Northern and Southern India respectively, and refers to the activities of his officers in connection with the restoration of the wealth of the vanquished princes The idea of a confederacy is purely imaginary No doubt the East Coast was not annexed to the Gupta Empire and this is in accordance with the indications in the record itself The severest critic of the Gupta monarch alludes to his probable initial success, even this may be consistently denied by him. As far as the

* Sathianathaier *Studies* pp 13-22
† Jouveau Dubreuil *Ancient History of the* pp 60-61

available evidence goes, the success of the expedition is unquestionable. It may be conjecturally assigned to about 350. It is mainly on the strength of his South Indian achievement that Dr. Smith hails Samudragupta as the *Indian Napoleon*. The *Arthasastra* of Kautilya mentions three types of conquerors: *Dharmavijayi, Lobhavijayi* and *Asuravijayi* (righteous, covetous and devilish conquerors), and on the ground that he reinstalled the South Indian princes, some would regard Samudragupta as a righteous conqueror, but in Northern India his policy was clean different. Only a speculative answer is possible to the question why he did not incorporate the conquered southern territory in his empire. Perhaps his ambition was only to secure recognition of his imperial position in South India. He annexed the Vakataka territory in Central India, but did not touch their possessions in the Dakhan. His numerous alliances in Northern and Western India show that he cared more for paramountcy than for a very extensive empire. It appears that he was a statesman as well as a great soldier. He is regarded as "perhaps the greatest of his dynasty."*

Annexations and Alliances. As regards Samudragupta's annexations in Northern India, he claims to have exterminated Rudradeva, Matila, Nagadatta, Chandravarman, Ganapatinaga, Nagasena, Achyuta, Nandin, Balavarman and other kings of Aryavarta. Of these, Achyuta and Nagasena seem to have encountered Samudragupta twice. All the princes mentioned above ruled over territories included in the Upper Gangetic Valley, Central India and Eastern India. Samudragupta's allies were numerous in North-Eastern India, at the foot of the Himalayas, and in the Panjab, Rajputana, Malwa, Western India and the Central Provinces, the chief among them being the kings of Assam and Nepal and the republican tribes, Malavas, Arjunayanas, Yaudheyas,

* R. D. Banerji, *The Age of the Imperial Guptas* (1933), p 25.

Prarjunas and Abhiras Another series of allies is mentioned including the Kushans the Western Satraps and the Ceylonese and 'all other dwellers in islands' This last expression has led some scholars to speak of the co operation of Samudragupta's navy with his army in his *digvijaya* and of the extension of his power to the islands of the Bay of Bengal and to the Malay Archipelago His relations with Ceylon are confirmed by Chinese evidence which mentions Meghavarna's embassy to him in order to obtain his permission for the building of a Sinhalese monastery at Bodh Gaya That king of Ceylon ruled from c 352 to c 379 and his synchronism with Samudragupta is an important chronological datum

Kaviraja Samudragupta The third and last part of Harisena's *prasasti* reinforces Samudragupta's accomplishments by mentioning his sharp and polished intellect His musical talents and his title of *Kaviraja* (king of poets) justified by his poetical works capable of securing the means of livelihood to learned men Here we have the third reference to his eminence as a poet Though none of his works are extant it is improper to dismiss the three references to his literary achievement as baseless His lyrist coins the best of his eight types confirm his proficiency in music It is not necessary to interpret the term *kaviraja* in its technical sense and regard him as superior to a *mahakavi* (a great poet) and as a polyglot In the genealogical section of the record he is mentioned as the daughter's son of Lichchhavi Lastly Harisena the author of this piece of poetic prose is given his official designation of Mahadandanayaka and described as the slave of the feet of the Paramabhattaraka (Samudragupta) Though the conventional parts of the eulogy are worthless for historical purpose the glorification and even deification of monarchy by Harisena cannot escape notice the king was

foundation as far as Northern India is concerned Some think that Samudragupta imitated the practice of South Indian princes A number of titles assumed by him on his coins corroborate his martial career As the first known date of his successor is 380, his death may be assigned to that year

Samudra's Place in Gupta History Samudragupta was the real founder of the Gupta Empire Though it was confined to Northern India and was much smaller than the Maurya Empire his imperial influence was much greater than is indicated by his territorial possessions He was a devout Vaishnava who stood for the harmony of creeds He was the patron of the distinguished Buddhist Vasubandhu and seems to have evinced interest in Buddhism Moreover he should be credited with a share in the advancement of culture characteristic of his dynasty, he certainly laid the foundations of the Gupta cultural edifice as well

SECTION III CHANDRAGUPTA II (*c* 380—*c* 415)

Ramagupta In the light of certain literary traditions Samudragupta is supposed to have been succeeded by Ramagupta The Hindu story of the fatal end of the last Western Satrap is confirmed by a Muslim account belonging to the eleventh century A D* The Sanjan Plates of Amoghavarsha I Rashtrakuta refer to "that donor in the Kali Age who was of the Gupta lineage having killed his brother we are told seized his kingdom and queen † Without questioning Ramagupta's paltroonery or the chivalrous conduct of his younger brother Chandragupta II or the latter's marriage with his brother's wife Dhruvadevi we may have critical misgivings regarding the enthronement of the former because of the omission of his name from the official

* R N Saletore *Life in the Gupta Age* (1943) pp 17 18
† *Epigraphia Indica* XVIII p 255

genealogy and because he is unknown to numismatics. Therefore Chandragupta II may be regarded as the direct successor of his father, who seems to have chosen him for the throne.*

Chandragupta's Conquest of Western India. Though the chronological limits of Chandragupta's reign are clearly indicated by the Mathura inscription (different from the old undated one) of the Gupta era 61 = 319 + 61 = A.D. 380, and the Sanchi record of Gupta era 93 = A.D. 412, his life is obscure. A dateless Udayagiri (Malwa) Cave inscription says that the emperor went there in person with a view to conquering "the whole world". As a preliminary to his conquest of Western India, he married his daughter, Prabhavati, by his second queen Kuberanaga, to the Vakataka king Rudrasena II. The details of his obliteration of the Western Satrap principality under Rudrasimha III are unknown, but the Gupta victory is vouched for positively by his inscriptions and coins and by later traditions and negatively by the cessation of Satrapal coins after 388. The conjectural date of the conquest is 395, though some suggest 409. Chandragupta II celebrated a horse-sacrifice, probably after his annexation of Western India, and a stone horse is found near Benares with the legend "Chandragu." His title of Vikramaditya was assumed probably in that connection, and he is identified with the traditional Vikramaditya, the destroyer of the Sakas (Western Satraps) and emperor of Ujjain. The incorporation of Western India in the Gupta Empire enormously enriched it by extending its limits to the Arabian Sea, established direct oversea contact with the Roman Empire, and increased the commercial importance of Ujjain. But it is uncertain whether the great sea-port of Broach belonged to the Gupta Empire, which stretched from the Himalayas to

* R. G. Basak, *The History of North-Eastern India* (1934), pp. iii-iv.

the Narmada and practically to the Mahanadi and from the mouth of the Hughli to the Jumna and the Chambal

The Capital Though Pataliputra continued to be the capital of the Gupta Empire as in the reign of Samudra gupta Ujjain appears to have become the *de facto* head quarters of the emperor Most of the inscriptions of Chandragupta are found in Malwa Probably here lies the reason for Fa hien s not mentioning the name of that emperor Tradition associates Vikramaditya with both Ujjain and Pataliputra, even Ayodhya is referred to as the imperial capital Inscriptions of the Kadambas emphasise their matrimonial connections with the Guptas and Sanskrit Literature alludes to Vikramaditya's diplo matic relations with Kuntala through Kalidasa Chandra gupta's many coin types exhibit his numerous titles expressive of his valour He must have died between 412 and 415 after a reign of more than thirty years

Fa-hien's Itinerary Innumerable Chinese pilgrims visited India the holy land of Buddhism the most famous of them being Fa hien Hiuen Tsang and I tsing the last of the trio wrote on sixty Chinese pilgrims who travelled in India in the seventh century A D The *apradakshina* (from right to left) journey of Fa hien from Chang an (China) the imperial capital to Northern India overland and thence by sea to Ceylon Java and Kiao chow (China), is an important chapter in the annals of pious adventure He spent fifteen years of his life (399 414) in travel, nine years in India including six years in the Gupta Empire He started from Central China crossed the desert passed through Khotan Kashgar, Udyana Gandhara Afghanistan and the Panjab and reached Mathura having witnessed the prosperous state of Buddhism all along the route He describes the condition of the Gangetic Doab calls it the Middle Kingdom of the Brahmans and portrays the character of the imperial administration Continuing his journey he visited

Kanauj, Ayodhya, Sravasti, Kapilavastu, Kusinagara and Vaisali, and arrived at Pataliputra. He mentions the stone buildings of Asoka erected by "spirits" and the hospitals of Magadha. Thence he proceeded to Rajagriha, Bodh-Gaya and Benares. Owing to the mountains and the insecurity of the roads of the Dakhan, he returned to Pataliputra, where he stayed for three years, studying Sanskrit and copying many Buddhist scriptures, including the *Vinayapitaka*, and thus carried out the main object of his journey to India. After the expiry of that period, he continued his travel, reached the sea-port of Tamluk, and remained there for two years before leaving for Ceylon with copies of the Buddhist Canon and images and paintings.

Historical Value. The account of Fahien's travel is full of miracles, general and local, demons, relics of the Buddha (his footprints, teeth, bowl, skull, spittoon, staff, etc.), monks and nuns, and many strange things. It smacks of the *sthalapurana*. He was primarily interested in Indian Buddhism, and looked at things through Buddhist spectacles. He was not interested in polities or administration directly. His general observations on Indian life are somewhat exaggerated and sometimes even untrue—the unqualified practice of *ahimsa*, the extreme purity of the people's lives from the point of view of their food and drink, and the use of cowrie shells as medium of exchange. Still he notes the decay of Buddhist holy places like Kapilavastu and Kusinagara, and his reference to the Middle Country as Brahman land is significant. Though his religion was vigorous and powerful in North-Western India and beyond, in the Gangetic Valley its position was behind Brahmanism. Above all his observations on the Gupta administration are precious in so far as they are objective and relate to a subject about which nothing substantial is known from other sources.

SECTION IV. KUMARAGUPTA I (*c* 415—*c* 455) and SKANDAGUPTA (*c* 455—*c* 467)

Kumaragupta I During the first half of the fifth century, the Gupta Empire enjoyed uninterrupted peace and tranquillity The consolidation of it by Chandragupta II increased its prosperity and prestige and facilitated the task of his successor Kumaragupta maintained intact his inherited position His abundant coinage and the provenance of his inscriptions show that he controlled the whole empire firmly and wisely He performed the horse sacrifice and issued an appropriate coinage He styled himself Mahendraditya His Vaishnavism did not prevent him from favouring the Skanda cult by his peacock coins and by naming his son Skanda, a variant of his own name Kumara His reign constitutes an epoch in cultural history, it witnessed not only the glory of Kalidasa and others, but also the foundation of the University of Nalanda It is a good commentary on his imperial administration that a company of silk weavers immigrated into his dominions and became highly prosperous This state of affairs was disturbed towards the close of his reign by the "powerful and wealthy" Pushyamitras a tribe belonging to the Narmada region, who overpowered the imperial army sent against them But Prince Skanda defeated them and rehabilitated the fortunes of his dynasty with some difficulty including personal discomforts

Skandagupta The theory of succession disputes even during the pendency of the late war does not seem to be well founded Skandagupta was the direct successor to his father, who did not live to congratulate his victorious son He was the last great Gupta of the imperial line who manfully struggled against the great Hunic danger to the empire and removed it for the time being about 458 He commemorated his double victory by erecting

a pillar at Bhitari, near Benares, crowned with a statue of Vishnu, and inscribed with the story of the grand deliverance from the Pushyamitra and Hun perils. The debasement of his currency in certain respects must have been caused by the costliness of the Hunic war. His Girnar inscription mentions the breach of Lake Sudarsana in 455 and its repair in the following year by Chakrapalita, the son of Governor Parnadatta (perhaps the Iranian Farnadata), in the short period of two months. He continued the enlightened attitude towards religion characteristic of his family.

SECTION V. DECLINE OF THE GUPTA EMPIRE

Successors of Skandagupta. During the next ten years (*c* 467—*c* 477) the imperial throne was occupied by Puragupta, Narasimhagupta and Kumaragupta II. This period witnessed the empire's loss of Kathiawar and Western Malwa. Budhagupta ruled from about 477 to about 496 over the territory from Bengal to Eastern Malwa. He was followed by Tathagatagupta and Baladitya (probably identical with Bhanugupta). The Hun chief, Toramana, challenged the Gupta power and established his authority in Malwa about 500. Two years later he was succeeded by his son Mihiragula. About 510 he was defeated by Baladitya who, according to Hiuen Tsang, set him free at the instance of the Queen-Mother. This victory over the Huns was completed about 533 by Yasodharman of Malwa. If Baladitya were the same as Bhanugupta, he must have reigned till about 545. But the rise of Yasodharman and of the Maukharis practically eclipsed the imperial line, which continued for some time more in Eastern India. Adityasena, who revived the Gupta Empire in the 7th century after the death of Harsha, belonged to the dynasty of the Guptas of Magadha, whose connection with the imperial Gupta family is a matter for conjecture.

Causes of Decline. Even under the great Guptas imperial strength was impaired by the hostility of the

Pushyamitras (bracketed with the Patumitras and Durmitras in the *Puranas*) and the Hunic hordes. Though Skandagupta's energy saved the empire for the moment, its evil day was only postponed His successors were unfit to cope with the increasingly complicated situation resulting from the enterprise and ferocity of Mihiragula and his father The foresight of Chandragupta II *in concentrating on the Western front of the empire* was not exhibited by his successors, some of whom vegetated at Pataliputra A few scholars attribute the ultimate failure of the empire partly to the devotion of the last three kings to Buddhism But their predecessors were not "accursed' Buddhists The Gupta monarchs sometimes modified the law of primogeniture into that of ultimogeniture but such a change in succession at the reigning sovereign s discretion would not work well except under strong rulers of shrewd judgment Coupled with

existence of a ministerial council is vaguely implied in the Allahabad Pillar inscription, which refers to the delight of the *sabhyas* at the selection of Samudragupta for the throne. Provinces were called *Bhuktis* and *Desas*, and Districts, *Vishayas* and *Pradesas;* Provincial Governors, *Uparikas,* (preferably princes) and *Goptris,* and District Officers, *Vishayapatis.* There were numerous other officials as the *Nagara-Sreshthi* (President of the City-Guild). The District was sub-divided into villages governed by headmen. In some respects there was a falling off from the Mauryan standard.

Fa-hien. These dry bones of epigraphical data are made to live by Fa-hien's observations. "The people are prosperous and happy without registration or official restrictions. Only those who till the King's land have to pay so much on the profit they make. Those who want to go away, may go; those who want to stop, may stop. The King in his administration uses no corporal punishments: criminals are merely fined according to the gravity of their offences. Even for a second attempt at rebellion, the punishment is only the loss of the right hand. The men of the King's body-guard have all fixed salaries."* This is a picture of mild and benevolent administration, free from vexatious state interference in the individual's life. The observation regarding royal revenue seems to imply that cultivators, other than the king's tenants, had no land revenue to pay! In regard to the criminal law and the absence of passport regulations, the Mauryan government was very different. The Gupta administration was eminently efficient in keeping the roads safe for travellers, as Fa-hien travelled without molestation throughout the Gangetic Valley.

SECTION VII. RELIGION

Brahmanism. The triumph of the orthodox religion represented by Vedic ritualism, Saivism and Vaishnavism

* H. A. Giles, *The Travels of Fa-hsien* (1923), pp. 20-21.

is clear from the inscriptions and coins of the Guptas, the literature of the period, and the notes of Fa hien referring to the Gangetic Valley as the land of the Brahmans and to the neglect suffered by one or two of the holy places of Buddhism. Most of the Guptas were Brahmanists specially devoted to Vaishnavism but their ministers and other officials belonged to various denominations. The great dynasts of the sixth century followed a similar policy, though Mihiragula in the ardency of his Saivaism did not spare the Buddhists. The worship of images and celebration of religious festivals gave a popular character to Brahmanism together with the composition of popular literature like the *Puranas*. The absorption of the foreign elements in the population, after the period of foreign rule into the Brahmanical society and the consequential social reorganisation contributed to the strength of Brahmanism and account for the energy it evinced during the Gupta period.

Buddhism. Fa hien's description of the condition of Buddhism in Central Asia and North Western India testifies to its vigour and prosperity. The numerous Hinayanists lived in peace with the Mahayanists whose pagodas (including *stupas*) were the home of ritual and prayer including the worship of the *Prajnaparamita*. The Brahmanical Madhyadesa practised *ahimsa* and temperance. Pagodas were erected in honour of Sariputta, Moggallana and Ananda. There were 96 schools of heretics including the followers of Devadatta. Though Fa hien was generally satisfied with the fortunes of Buddhism in the Gangetic plain he draws pointed attention to the unsatisfactory state of some great Buddhist centres. Regarding Kapilavastu he remarks "Therein no king nor people are to be found it is just like a wilderness except for the priests and some tens of families. The country of Kapilavastu is desolate and barren with very few inhabitants. On the roads white elephants and lions are to be feared,

travellers must not be incautious. In this city (Kusinagara) too, the inhabitants are few and scattered, and are only such as are connected with the priesthood." Such was also the state of Sravasti. He describes the city of Gaya as "a complete waste within its walls." But with reference to Bodh-Gaya, he merely says that "it is in a woody district." Still there was no general decline of Buddhism. Monastic discipline was strictly maintained as in the days of the Buddha. Fa-hien says: "Virtuous Shamans (priests) and scholars from the four quarters, wishing to investigate the principles of duty to one's neighbour, all come to the latter (Hinayana) monastery" (at Pataliputra). He mentions the pagoda of Nalanda, without any indication of its being a seat of learning. A few Buddhist authors like Vasubandhu are known to have been patronised by the great Guptas. The remains of a large number of monasteries and the predominance of Buddhist sculptures in the Sarnath Museum tend to confirm the impression of Fa-hien about the state of his religion in Northern India. No doubt the progress of Brahmanism must have reduced the comparative importance of Buddhism, but it was the Hun invasions that proved fatal to it in North-Western India by the destruction of the splendid monasteries which constituted the heart of Buddhism.

Jainism. The inconspicuousness and lack of ambition of Jainism largely saved it from the vicissitudes of fortune. Though overshadowed by both Brahmanism and Buddhism, it never crossed the path of the former, which in consequence was less hostile to Jainism than to Buddhism. The great Council of 454 was held at Valabhi, and the Jain Canon of the Svetambaras was committed to writing, and many copies of it produced. The venue of the council shows the concentration of Jainism in Western India. In spite of its division into two sects, it flourished in South India as well, where its decline commenced only in the seventh century.

SECTION VIII. ECONOMIC CONDITION

Free Hospitals. Fa-hien's picture is an eloquent commentary on the economic condition of the Gupta Empire and on the part played by private initiative in the foundation of institutions for the alleviation of human suffering. "Thus (Magadha) has the largest cities and towns. Its people are rich and thriving and emulate one another in practising charity of heart and duty to one's neighbour....The elders and gentry of these countries have instituted in their capitals free hospitals and hither come all poor or helpless patients, orphans, widowers and cripples. They are well taken care of; a doctor attends them, food and medicine being supplied according to their needs They are all made quite comfortable, and when they are cured they go away." In mentioning cowries as medium of exchange, without any reference to the Gupta coins, Fa hien records a half-truth The cause of the general prosperity of the empire was the conduct of extensive trade with the West and the East, coupled with a vigorous industrial life at home, reflected in the literature of the period and, to some extent, in inscriptions

Guild of Silk-Weavers. The Mandasor Stone inscription of Kumaragupta I, composed by Vatsabhatti of literary fame, says: "From Lata to this city of Dasapura there came in a band, together with their children and kinsmen, men who were renowned in the world for their skill in silk-weaving and who, being manifestly attracted by the virtues of the kings of the country, gave no thought to the continuous discomforts produced by the journey and its accompaniments. ..Honourably treated like sons by the kings, in joy and happiness they settled in this city. Some of them became excessively well acquainted with the science of archery; others, devoting themselves to hundreds of excellent achievements, became acquainted with excellent tales, and others, unassuming in their modesty, devoted themselves to discourses of the true religion. Some excelled in their own business of

silk-weaving; and by others, possessed of high aims, the science of astrology (or astronomy or both) was mastered; and even today others of them, valorous in battle, effect by force the destruction of their enemies....And so the guild shines gloriously all around."

SECTION IX. SOCIAL LIFE

Caste. We have seen that reorganisation gave a definite place in Hindu society to the foreigners who had become permanent residents in this country. After a period of liberalisation, the caste system assumed a kind of rigidity, and the Brahman became indisputably the crown of the social structure. The glory of gifts to Brahmans was increasingly emphasised, and derelictions of the prescribed caste duties were kept under control by the threat of punishment in hell proportionate to the gravity of the offence. Fa-hien was struck with the general practice of *ahimsa* except by the untouchables; he records his impressions in the language of exaggeration: "Throughout the country no one kills any living thing, nor drinks wine, nor eats onions or garlic; but Chandalas are segregated. Chandala is their name for foul men. These live away from other people, and when they approach a city or market, they beat a piece of wood in order to distinguish themselves. Then people know who they are and avoid coming into contact with them. In this country they do not keep pigs or fowls, there are no dealings in cattle, no butchers' shops or distilleries in their market-places..... Only the Chandalas go hunting and deal in flesh."

Women. The assimilation of the status of women to that of Sudras was completed and their degradation ensured, and the *Puranas* were intended for the edification of those classes who had been declared incompetent to pursue the study of the fundamental religious texts. The subjection of women was regularised; though they should

be protected and generously treated,* their rigorous subordination to the male sex was laid down, together with the wife's worship of even the husband with the whip hand Manu who had declared the Aryan law in the previous period recommends wife-beating in certain circumstances He was strongly opposed to *niyoga*, but would tolerate spinsterhood in case no suitable husband was available †

SECTION X CULTURE

A Golden Age of Florescence The Gupta period has been called "a golden age" and compared with the Periclean age of ancient Greece Some scholars speak of a Renaissance or rebirth of culture Though phenomenal intellectual progress was a distinctive feature of the age, the implication of the term rebirth is misleading We have seen that the Indian mind was not struck with sterility in the previous epoch of foreign domination, the foreign rulers, far from being inimical to Indian culture, speedily imbibed it and promoted its fortunes Therefore the Gupta period is to be characterised as one of "florescence" rather than of "renascence" There was a great religious and cultural revival which influenced the parts of India not included in the Gupta Empire and even the Hindu colonies across the seas In the previous epochs there had been substantial imperial, commercial and artistic activity, but they had not displayed so much literary and scientific energy as did the Gupta period, which is characterised by progress in all directions The decline of the empire did not mean the decline of cultural progress, and the intellectual power it had liberated flowed continuously in spite of the empire's suspended animation in the sixth century

Language and Script The Gupta age witnessed the dominance of Sanskrit which had become the language of

* Meyer, *op cit* II, p 486
† Altekar *op cit*, pp 422 28

Mahayanism as well. The Nagari script was being evolved from Brahmi; and the Gupta alphabet came into existence. Pali was employed by the Sinhalese Buddhists and other Hinayanists, and the Jains confined themselves to Prakrit for religious purposes. The literary output of the age was so great as to incline scholars to describe it as one of "general literary impulse."

Literature: Kalidasa. The greatness of Kalidasa was recognised by Goethe, and his masterpiece the *Sakuntala* is among "the hundred best books of the world." His humility in calling himself a *manda* (dullard) and a pigmy has probably been responsible for the tradition which represents him as a good-for-nothing fellow who attained greatness owing to Goddess Kali's intervention and benediction. On the other hand, his works prove his extensive learning. The story that he was the contemporary of eight other "jewels" is unreliable though he is generally regarded as the protege of Vikramaditya. He was a *Sivabhakta* with Vedantic leanings, a cultured man of aristocratic disposition. His close association with Ujjain is clear. His dramas are the *Sakuntala*, the *Malavikagnimitra* and the *Vikramorvasi;* his epics, the *Raghuvamsa* and the *Kumarasambhava;* his lyrics, the *Meghaduta* or *Meghasandesa* (the model for *sandesa-kavyas*) and the *Ritusamhara* (attributed to him by some scholars with unnecessary hesitation). Many other productions have been fathered upon him without sufficient grounds. He is the greatest poet and playwright in Sanskrit Literature; he is generally assigned to the first half of the fifth century, and his influence on the Vatsabhatti inscription of 472-3 is evident.

Visakhadatta and Sudraka. The *Mudrarakshasa* of Visakhadatta belongs to the early fifth century, though some would assign it to the sixth century and even later. It is a play with a hero—Kautilya—but without a heroine. Devotion to the king takes the place of the usual

love element, and politics is dominant throughout Kautilya who is regarded as a *Duratma* (a wicked fellow) by his bitterest enemy, Rakshasa, is towards the end of the play recognised by the latter as a *Mahatma* (a noble soul) because of the astonishing success of his statecraft Visakhadatta has been called the Indian Corneille. His other drama, the *Devichandraguptam*, is known only from extracts quoted by another author. The great admiration felt for Sudraka, the author of the *Mrichchhakatika*, has been lessened by the discovery of Bhasa's *Charudatta*, though some would regard the latter as a stage adaptation of the former. It is the story of a rich Brahman Charudatta, who loves the noble courtesan Vasantasena and is loved by her even after his faulty generosity has reduced him to penury. "It is pre-eminent among Indian plays for the distinctively dramatic qualities of vigour, life and action, as well as skill in the delineation of character."* It combines serious and comic situations and gives us a good idea of the social life of its age Its "un-Indian" characteristics are emphasised by those who support the theory of Greek influence on the Sanskrit drama

Bharavi, Dandin and Subandhu. The theme of Bharavi's *Kiratarjuniya*, a *mahakavya* assigned to the sixth century, is the conflict of Arjuna with Siva Its merit consists in its descriptions of Nature approaching to the excellence of Kalidasa. It contains verbal jugglery of various kinds appreciated by Indian critics Dandin and Subandhu belong to the sixth century, though some would place them in the following century Dandin's *Kavyadarsa* deals with poetics, and his *Dasakumaracharita*, with the adventures of ten princes in well-adorned prose The latter work is a romance, emphasising the love element and introducing us to rogues, vagabonds, thieves, gamblers and courtesans, its value for social life is indeed great The *Vasavadatta* of Subandhu is another romance full of

* Macdonell, *op. cit*, p. 108

descriptions, long compounds and puns. It is the story of a prince and a princess loving each other in a dream, of their meeting with the help of two parrots, of their flight on a magic horse, and of the princess becoming a stone and subsequently regaining her original form. It constitutes no easy reading.

The Panchatantra and the Amarakosa. The *Panchatantra* is a great treasure-house of stories intended for the instruction and edification of the young, but that originally it was a book to teach polities to princes is sufficiently clear from the researches of Prof. Edgerton. It is to be assigned to the period, 300—500. Its Brahmanical character has been established; the theory of its Buddhist origin is untenable. It is the parent of the *Hitopadesa*, compiled after 1000. It has been translated into many languages, Indian and foreign. "Probably no book except the Bible has been translated into so many languages, certainly no secular book."* Its influence on the fable literature of the world is astonishing. Boccaccio and Chaucer were indebted to it. "The story of the migration of Indian fairy tales from East to West is more wonderful and instructive than many of those fairy tales themselves."† The Buddhist Amarasimha's *Namalinganusasana*, usually called the *Amarakosa* or the lexicon of Amara, is devoted to the synonyms of personal and common names in three chapters, divided into sections and arranged, after careful analysis from the point of view of the intrinsic connection of words with other words, Roget's *Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases*, among modern dictionaries, being the nearest approximation to it. It gives the gender of names by a skilful means conducive to brevity, and a section deals with homonyms and another with indeclinables. That its author was a Buddhist is known, not from his vocabulary which is not

* *Ibid.*, p. 123.

† *Ibid.*

specially Buddhistic, but from his enumeration quite at the beginning of the various names of the Buddha, before those of the Brahmanical gods are dealt with Of the numerous commentaries on the lexicon the recently published *Tilasarvasvam* is one of the best extant

The Dharmasastras and the Puranas The *Dharmasastras* of Manu and Yajnavalkya have been assigned to the previous period Though closely modelled on that of Manu, the treatises of Narada and Brihaspati are more developed from the point of view of law The list of works of this class given by Mr P V Kane in his *History of the Dharmasastra* is astonishing in its length The *Puranas*, originally dynastic annals were modified and extended through the ages until some of them obtained their present shape in the Gupta age They were finally transformed into religious works devoted to the glorification of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, and became saturated with sectarianism There are 18 *Puranas*, besides *Upapuranas* Though they have contributed to mass education and religious instruction, their extravagances and superstitions can never conduce to the enrichment of the intellect or to balanced judgment The most popular of the *Puranas* is the *Bhagavata Purana*, inculcating *bhakti* in Krishna, regarded as an incarnation of Vishnu, but the *Vishnu Purana* was raised to canonical rank by Ramanuja The *Vayu*, *Matsya* (both devoted to Siva) and *Vishnu Puranas* belong to the Gupta period, and are assigned to about 350, 400 and 500 respectively The *Markandeya Purana* (devoted to Brahma), regarded as the most ancient from the point of view of its contents, makes Indra and Brahma supreme

Brahmanical Philosophy The Mimamsaka Sabara belongs to this age and his *Bhashya* is the earliest existing commentary on the *Purvamimamsa Sutras* of Jaimini His work was differently interpreted later and two schools of Mimamsa developed Though the *Sankhya*

Sutras are regarded as belonging to the fifteenth century, the *Sankhya-karika* of Isvara Krishna was produced in the fourth century, and has been described by modern critics as "the pearl of the whole scholastic literature of India". The *Nyaya Bhashya* of Vatsyayana (different from the author of the *Kama Sutra*) is assigned to about 350, and Uddyotakara commented on it. The *Yoga Bhashya* of "Vyasa" may be dated about 500.

Buddhist Philosophy. The great Buddhist works of the period are in Sanskrit except those of Buddhaghosha who lived in the fifth century and of Mahanaman, the author of the *Mahavamsa*, the famous history of Ceylon, who flourished in the sixth century, both of whom wrote in Pali. Buddhaghosha belonged to Magadha, studied Buddhism in Ceylon, and gained fame as a commentator on the *Tripitaka* and as the author of the *Visuddhimagga*, or Path to Nirvana, an independent philosophical work. His learning was wide and deep, but it is untenable to regard him either as a philosopher of originality or as "a great teacher of mankind". Aryasanga or Asanga, who belonged to Peshawar and lived in the fourth century A.D., founded the Yogachara School of Buddhist philosophy (some regard his teacher Maitreyanatha as its real founder), according to which *vijnana* or *bodhi*, the absolute, is attained by yoga practices characteristic of the Hinayana—"a philosophic movement as powerful and of as widespread influence as that of Plato and Aristotle." His younger brother Vasubandhu, patronised by Samudragupta, possessed learning and originality. He developed the doctrine of idealism on which he wrote two classical works, and his *Abhidharmakosa* deals with Metaphysics, Psychology, Ethics and salvation; its popularity is clear from Bana's reference to parrots expounding it in the hermitage of Divakaramitra. Thanks to his brother, Vasubandhu became a Mahayanist and commented on the *Mahajana Sutras*. He became an indisputable authority on both *yanas*. Dingnaga, the reputed

logician and disciple of Vasubandhu was the dialectician of the Yogachara School and his logic is 'comparable to that of Aristotle in its originality and in the fact that it spread over the whole eastern half of Asia' His system was expounded in the seventh century by Dharmakirti Some scholars regard Dingnaga as the author of the *Kundamala* a Sanskrit drama anticipating in some respects the *Uttararamacharita* of Bhavabhuti The Buddhist writers of this period were saturated with the true philosophic spirit and their intellectual fecundity is astonishing Tibetan sources refer to the six ornaments of Jambudvipa (India) two trios—Nagarjuna Aryadeva and Asanga Vasubandhu Dingnaga and Dharmakirti

Science Vagbhata and Aryabhata Buddhist Sanskrit Manuscripts on medicine have been recovered from Chinese Turkistan and are assigned to the fourth or fifth century The Vriddha Vagbhata the third of the medical trio lived in the sixth century according to some scholars and was a Buddhist The contents of his *Ashtangasamgraha* (Summary of the Eight Sections of Medicine) are mentioned by Itsing He acknowledges his indebtedness to Charaka and Susruta The five *Siddhantas* (the *Surya Pitamaha Vasishtha, Paulisa* and *Romaka* systems of astronomy) of which only the first is extant exhibiting varying degrees of Greek influence—and two of them are named after Paul and Rome (Alexandria)— were probably compiled in the fourth century The *Romaka Siddhanta* showing the maximum of Western influence corrects Greek doctrines from the Indian point of view there are fundamental differences between the foreign and indigenous systems The work of Aryabhata called *Aryabhatiya* written in 499 deals with Mathematics and Astronomy and follows the *Surya Siddhanta*, it mentions the diurnal revolution of the earth on its axis—a view rejected later by Varahamihira and other astronomers—, explains solar and lunar eclipses

scientifically, and gives the correct ratio of the diameter to the circumference.

Varahamihira. Varahamihira lived in the sixth century and composed in 505 the *Panchasiddhantika*, which gives an account of the five astronomical systems. In astrology his works superseded their predecessors and secured for him the foremost place in that subject. His *Brihat Samhita*, in 106 chapters, is a great work in Sanskrit Literature, a veritable encyclopædia of ancient Indian learning and superstition, dealing with astronomy, astrology, geography, weather, animals, women, marriage, the harem, omens, etc. It contains a noble vindication of women against the attacks of misogynists, and the advocacy of their cause by Varahamihira is admirably modern. Horoscopy was chiefly an importation from the West, unknown to earlier Indian writers, especially Kautilya who had no idea of planetary influence on human life. The very word *hora* was borrowed and cleverly explained as short for *ahoratra* (day and night). Varahamihira's *Brihajjataka*, treating of *Horasastra* or predictive astrology, is the standard work on the subject, and an abridgement of it is the *Laghujataka*. Therefore the prediction of a man's future on the basis of planetary positions at the time of his birth is largely of foreign origin, though natural astrology developed in India from the Vedic age.

Art: Sculpture. The Hun and Muslim invasions of India have almost completely destroyed the architecture of the age, to which belong the earliest stone buildings extant. The temple at Deogarh, near Jhansi, contains a good specimen of Siva's image in ascetic dress. The sculptures in the temple at Garhwa, near Allahabad, continue the tradition of Bharhut and Sanchi without any influence of the Gandhara school, while the standing Buddha at Mathura—a beautiful work of art—exhibits a little Greek influence. The Sarnath excavations have brought to light a seated Buddha statue characteristic

of the Gupta style—a sublime creation— an Avalokitesvara—a masterpiece— a stele illustrating the birth of the Buddha etc and a column, on the many sided shaft of which are amorous couples, etc illustrating the unique decorative excellence of the Gupta age His gigantic copper statue found at Sultanganj near Bhagalpur now in the Birmingham Museum about 7½ feet high and nearly a ton in weight and the Delhi Iron Pillar of Chandra 23 feet 8 inches in height and 16 4 inches in diameter at the base and 12 05 inches at the top show the wonderful progress of metallurgy The pillar is still free from rust though completely exposed to the weather for so many centuries "It is not many years since the production of such a pillar would have been an impossibility in the largest foundries of the world and even now there are comparatively few where a similar mass of metal could be turned out" (Ball) * The Bhitari monolithic pillar of Skandagupta and other columns are noteworthy Gupta sculpture is remarkable for its "freshness and vitality", its chief characteristics are beauty and dignity refined restraint freedom from sensuality thoroughly Indian qualities expression of the Buddha's mental repose dominance of decoration hand posture (*mudra*) signifying various qualities and multiplication of icons superseding the Buddha legend and the *Jatakas* (except at Ajanta) Hence art critics like Dr Smith regard Gupta art as "Hindu art at its best"

and XVII are assigned to about 500. "The Dying Princess" is incomparable for its pathos; it represents Nanda's bride bewailing her separation from him. Other caves contain frescoes illustrating the *Jatakas*. Cave XIX contains good sculpture and numerous painted figures of the Buddha. The paintings represent the best achievement of India in their line, and "excite respectful admiration as the production of painters capable of deep emotion, full of sympathy with the nature of men, women, children, animals and plants, and endowed with masterly powers of execution."* The Bagh caves (Gwalior State) contain "paintings of high merit and infinite variety"† which conform to the standard of excellence attained at Ajanta. At Sigiriya the frescoes depict ladies carrying flowers to the Buddhist temple and belong to the close of the fifth century, but they do not come up to the level of the finest at Ajanta. "Almost all that belongs to the common spiritual consciousness of Asia . . . is of Indian origin in the Gupta period."‡

Coinage: Samudragupta. Samudragupta issued eight types of gold coinage. (1) The *dhvaja* or Standard type imitates the Kushan dress and standing posture, though Siva's trident is replaced by the *garudadhvaja*, Vishnu's emblem. (2) The Archer type was the coin continued by many of his successors. (3) The Battle-axe type substitutes the battle-axe for the Standard. (4) The Kacha type introduces the figure of Lakshmi. (5) The Tiger-slayer type exhibits him in Indian dress, slaying a tiger. (6) The Chandragupta I type, struck to commemorate his father's marriage, has on the obverse the names, Chandragupta and Kumaradevi, and on the reverse, Lichchhavyah. (7) The *Asvamedha* type, with the figure of the horse, celebrates his great achievement.

* *Ibid.*, p. 106.
† *Ibid.*, p. 108.
‡ Coomaraswamy, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

(8) The Lyrist type depicts him in Indian dress, sitting cross legged, using the *tuna*, on the obverse, and Lakshmi on the reverse The excellent modelling of the king s figure the skilful delineation of the features, the careful attention to details and the general ornateness of the design in the best specimens constitute this type as the highest expression of Gupta numismatic art '* The coin legends emphasise his valour and invincibility and describe the conquest of the world as the door to heaven The *Asvamedha* type adds the expression, ' restorer of the *Asvamedha* "

Chandragupta II Chandragupta II continued the Archer and Tiger-slayer gold coins of his father replacing in the latter case the tiger by the lion A unique coin represents him as fighting with the lion He introduced the *Chhatra* (umbrella) and horseman types Consequent on his conquest of Western India he issued a silver coinage for local circulation, changing the Western Satrapal type only to the extent of introducing the Garuda or Vishnu's bird and the Gupta era He devised nine types of copper coins on most of which the Garuda is found on the reverse one of these types has Chandra on the obverse

Kumaragupta I and Skandagupta Besides imitating Samudragupta's *Asvamedha* type and some of the types of his own father Kumaragupta introduced the Peacock type (on the obverse the king standing and feeding a peacock and on the reverse God Kumara on a peacock) and the elephant rider and *Pratapa* types He struck silver coins with the figure of a peacock for the central part of his empire and continued the Garuda type in Western India . Only a few of his copper coins are extant Skandagupta s gold coins are scarce and of only two types He changed the Kushan standard of weight and made his coins heavier but the purity of the metal

* Brown *op cit* p 43

was impaired. He continued his father's Garuda and Peacock types of silver coins and added two new types—one with Siva's bull and another with an altar.

Foreign Influence. Besides the foreign influences so far noticed, there is found on the obverse of the Archer and other similar types the king's name shortened—Samudra, Chandra, etc.,—and inscribed vertically, a characteristic of later Kushan coins derived from China. Yet "the splendid gold coinage of the Guptas, with its many types and infinite varieties and its inscriptions in Classical Sanskrit, now appearing on Indian coins for the first time, are the finest examples of purely Indian art of this kind we possess."* The Gupta gold coins were imitated by Sasanka, the silver coins by the Maukharis and Toramana, perhaps by Harsha as well, and the copper coins by Toramana and Mihiragula.

Causes of Cultural Progress. The phenomenal intellectual and artistic activity of the Gupta age was the culmination of Indian effort in the previous periods. Viewed in this light, an explanation of it is less difficult than when it is regarded as a sudden development following a supposed cultural interregnum or anarchy. Though golden ages are generally difficult to explain as, like genius, they are not governed by laws, a few factors contributing to their glory may be mentioned. The peace and vast resources of the Gupta Empire must have enabled its sovereigns to give a fillip to cultural progress, and we know that a few of them at any rate were themselves distinguished men of varied accomplishments, capable of discriminate patronage of learning and technical skill. We have seen that Samudragupta was an extraordinary combination of energy and erudition. Chandragupta II, identifiable with the traditional Vikramaditya, must have been a great patron of letters, though the juxtaposition of *navaratnas* or "nine gems" is discredited, as in the

* *Ibid.*, pp. 40-41.

much later case of the *ashtadiggajas* or "eight elephants" of Krishnadeva Raya of Vijayanagar On one type of his coins, Chandragupta II is entitled *Rupakrit*, meaning a dramatist(?) or painter Besides appreciating art and letters the Guptas were sympathetic towards Buddhism, and hence the Buddhist sculptures and paintings of their age. The revival of Brahmanism must be reckoned as another driving force Though foreign contact was not the main factor, it provided scope for improvement in some directions

SECTION XI. FOREIGN INFLUENCE ON INDIAN CULTURE

Hellenistic. Drama We have already given much attention to this question, except in the vague case of early Babylonian influence, in connection with Iranian and Greek contacts with India We may now review the Hellenistic contribution to Indian civilisation, pursue the Iranian influences further, and consider the possibility of Christian inspiration in the field of religion The theory of the unreceptiveness of India for Hellenism has been seen to be untenable in the realms of coinage, Astronomy and Astrology, and fine art Predictive Astrology as expounded by Varahamihira exhibits the maximum influence of the West Besides technical terms and some names of the zodiacal signs, there was substantial borrowing The *Garga Samhita* belonging to the previous period speaks of the Greeks as worthy of honour like Rishis for their knowledge of Astronomy and Astrology, though they were *mlechchhas* or barbarians In the religious sphere the use of images may be attributed to Greek influence The assumption of the indebtedness of the Sanskrit drama to the Greeks is based on the absence of dramatic literature in India before the Greek conquest in the second century B C. But the word *nataka* and other allied terms are derived from the Prakrit *nat* and the Sanskrit *nrit*, and the origin of the Sanskrit drama may be adequately explained with

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contact and its political character for two centuries and to the fact that the Greeks and the Hindus were the two most intellectual peoples of the ancient world, it is surprising that Hellenism should not have played a more important part in India. The fact of the matter is that, like the Greeks, the Hindus were not averse to borrowing from the peoples who had something really good to give them, and when they borrowed discriminately, they assimilated the foreign element in an admirable manner, so much so that in some cases the proof of indebtedness is difficult to elucidate. There is no doubt that the contact of the Greeks with India revolutionised her coinage, enriched her astronomy, and improved her art.

Iranian and Christian. "If the childhood of Buddhism was Indian, it grew to adolescence in a motley bazaar where Persians and their ways were familiar."* We have seen the extent of Iranian influence on Mahayanism. Though Sun worship is as old as the *Vedas*, the Iranian form of it was introduced into India in the early centuries of the Christian era. Harsha describes his father, grandfather and great-grandfather as *paramadityabhaktas* (great devotees of the Sun), and their cult was the Magian cult of the Sun. Images of the Sun-god were worshipped in special temples. The doctrine of *bhakti* or devotion to God has been attributed by some to Christian influence, but we have seen in the pre-Christian centuries the growth in India of that doctrine, which may be traced back to the time of Panini in the seventh or sixth century B.C. The resemblances between the legends of Christ and Krishna are pointed out; but the late development of the story of Krishna should not obscure the indigenous origin and growth of Indian *bhakti*. Christian doctrines like the love of God and salvation by faith had developed in this country before the birth of Christ. There is no trace in ancient Indian

* Elliot, *op. cit.*, III, p. 451.

literature of the fundamental doctrine of Christianity that Christ died for the salvation of the world. Further, Christianity during this period was confined to a few localities (North-Western India, Malabar Coast and Mylapore, Madras), which were not at all powerful to influence the religion of the country as a whole. Moreover, similarities of beliefs and practices may be explained by Indian antecedents.

SECTION XII. INDIAN INFLUENCE ON WESTERN THOUGHT

Pythagoras and Plato. We have seen that, from the 6th century B.C. at any rate, India was in close contact with the West and that, in the 3rd century B.C., Asoka sent Buddhist missions to Western Asia, Africa and Europe. The activity of Indian trade with Rome during the early centuries of the Christian era continued in the Gupta period. In the wake of this intercourse Indian ideas flowed to the West. Pythagoras, who lived about 500 B.C., organised societies, the members of which lived together and practised self-restraint, if not asceticism of the Indian type, and believed in metempsychosis and other Indian doctrines, opposed to the Hellenic bent of mind. Plato (429—347 B.C.), the great Athenian philosopher, disciple of Socrates and *guru* of Aristotle, was non-Hellenic in some respects and believed in metempsychosis. Megasthenes says that Indian philosophers discoursed like Plato about the immortality of the soul.

Buddhist-Christian Parallels. Several parallels to passages in Buddhist Literature, Pali and Sanskrit, are found in the four canonical Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) belonging to the first century A.D. and in the apocryphal Gospels originating in the second and third centuries A.D.; some of them are remarkable and accurate even in details "There is not the least proof of Christian missions in India in the first century, and it is highly improbable that Christianity influenced the origin of the

Mahayana It is not likely that anything much about Christians was known in India prior to the third century (A D) * The more important parallels are the miraculous birth of the Buddha and of Christ (scholars like Barth find a parallel even in the latter's virgin birth), prediction of the future greatness of the babies by Asita and Simeon respectively the story of the boy's parents missing him for some time the exclamation of Kisagotami and of a woman and the consequent definition of true happiness and true blessedness by the Buddha and Christ—a strikingly close parallel contests with Mara and Satan walking on water by a disciple of the Buddha and by Peter sinking a little consequent on disturbed faith and triumphing on revival of faith—a parallel accurate even in details the story of a miraculous cake of the Buddha satisfying the hunger of 500 of his disciples and Christ feeding about 5 000 persons with "five loaves and two fishes and the Buddhist story of a poor girl's gift to the Sangha of her two copper coins and the Christian story of a poor widow's contribution of two mites (half farthings) and the emphasis on the greatness of the sacrifice in both cases Besides these parallels many monastic practices are common to Buddhism and Christianity three of them—celibacy of the clergy confession and veneration of relics—are so characteristic of early Buddhism and new to Christianity that the latter must have borrowed them from the former in the third and fourth centuries A D Finally in the Middle Ages the Buddha became a Catholic saint under the name of Josaphat a corruption of *Bodhisat*

Bardesanes and Basilides Indian influence was even greater on non-orthodox Christianity Gnosticism emphasises *Gnosis* (knowledge of God) and corresponds to our *jnanamarga* Bardesanes the Gnostic (A D 155—233) wrote on Indian religion and taught a kind of *karma*

* Winternitz *op cit* II, p 408

doctrine. Basilides regarded God as devoid of qualities—our conception of *Nirguna Brahman.*

Mani and Plotinus. Though Mani (215—276), the founder of Manichaeism, was an eclectic, he insisted upon asceticism, *ahimsa* and celibacy; the members of his Order practised these virtues and lived on public charity. Above all, Plotinus (203-262), a non-Christian and the founder of Neo-Platonism, was thoroughly Indian in spirit. His highest principle is God, "beyond good and evil"; he emphasises fasting, meditation and avoidance of pleasure; he regards union with God as the true happiness; the world is unreal and can be treated only as a halting-place on the road to God; after death, happiness is attained by the merging of the individual soul in the universal soul.

Mathematics and Medicine. The numerical figures and the decimal system constitute our basic gift not only to the West but to the whole world, though a few dispute this verdict. Charaka and Susruta through the medium of the Arabs dominated European medicine during the Middle Ages and down to the seventeenth century. The formation of artificial noses was learnt by English doctors from India in eighteenth century.

Literature and Philosophy. We have referred to the migrations of the *Panchatantra.* Kalidasa's *Sakuntala* influenced the Prologue to Goethe's *Faust,* and his *Meghaduta,* a passage in Schiller's *Maria Stuart,* and Indian philosophy, Emerson, the American essayist and philosopher. From Pythagoras and Plato to Shelley and Wordsworth the direct or indirect influence, to a very limited extent, of India on Western thought may be traced.*

* Garratt (Ed.), *The Legacy of India* (1937), pp. 1-37; S. M. Melamed, *Spinoza and Buddha* (1933), pp. 299-351.

SECTION XIII THE HUNS IN INDIA

Toramana. The nomadic Huns who devastated Europe from 375 to the death of Attila in 453 constituted one branch migrating from Central Asia in search of fresh woods and pastures new Another branch called the White Huns occupied the Oxus Valley and had succeeded by 484 in crushing the opposition of the Sassanians under Firoz (459—84), who lost his life in the effort While the conquest of Persia was going on India was invaded We have followed the vicissitudes of their fortune during Skandagupta s reign and after his death Their initial failure was wiped off by their subsequent success about 500 under Toramana who after the conquest of Malwa styled himself *Maharajadhiraja* This triumph was partly due to the final failure of Persia to stem the tide of Hun invasion in 484 and the consequent increase in the number of Indian invaders to their barbarian strength and ferocity and to the weakness of the Gupta Empire after the death of Skandagupta about 467

Mihiragula In 502 Mihiragula stepped into his father s place and ruled over his Indian possessions from Sagala The Asiatic Empire of the Huns outside India extended from Persia to Khotan including both and was powerful enough to induce the Chinese Emperor to send Song Yun to its capital in 519 and Mihiragula seems to have been feudatory to that empire He received the Chinese envoy in 520 in Gandhara which was a part of his dominions He was defeated probably twice in Malwa in 510 and 533 His second and final defeat was followed by the usurpation of his throne at Sagala by his younger brother He was consequently obliged to seek the hospitality of Kashmir But soon he turned against his host seized the throne of Kashmir invaded Gandhara butchered the people violently persecuted the Buddhists and destroyed their monuments He died at last probably in 542 The Christian monk mariner Cosmas Indicopleustes in his *Christian Topography* written in 547,

mentions Gollas (Mihiragula) as lord of India, refers to his fiscal oppression and tyranny, and says that his army was so large as to have drunk dry the ditch surrounding a besieged city. But the date to which this reference belongs is not known Mihiragula was a fiend in human shape, and has been called the Attila of India. His head exhibited on his coins—the type is copied from Gupta, Persian and Kushan coins, but the legend is in Nagari script—" is coarse and brutal to the last degree ". There is a Kashmirian story of his pastime of torturing elephants by throwing them down from hill tops. Hiuen Tsang notes that " his career was cut short by his sudden death, and the air was darkened, and the earth quaked, and fierce winds rushed forth as he went to the Hell of unceasing torment."

Causes of Hun Failure. The causes of the ultimate failure of the Huns in India must be sought for in the atrocities of the invaders and in the unbearable tyranny of Mihiragula. The Hun power in Persia was overthrown during 503—13, and in 565 by Noshirwan the Just, " the most illustrious member of the Sassanian dynasty," who with the help of the Turks invaded the home of the Huns in the Oxus Valley, killed their king, and divided the latter's territory between himself and his ally. Hence there was no fresh immigration of the barbarians into India. Many Indian rulers followed an anti-Hunic policy like Baladityagupta, Yasodharman of Malwa, the Maukharis of Kanauj and the Pushyabhutis of Thanesar. Further, the ferocious tribes were tamed by their contact with an old civilisation and became rapidly Hinduised.

Effects of Hun Invasions. The effects of the domination of the Huns in India were substantial. They ruined the Gupta Empire and Buddhism in North-Western India, and their tyrannical rule provoked opposition fatal to it. Ultimately they became merged in the Indian population and contributed to the rise of many Rajput dynasties.

SECTION XIV. YASODHARMAN OF MALWA

The Mandasor Inscriptions Yasodharman is known to us from two inscriptions—the Mandasor (the Gwalior State) Pillar inscription (a copy of which is inscribed on another pillar near it) and the Stone inscription, in the same place, of Yasodharman and Vishnuvardhana, dated in 589 (Malwa or Vikrama era) expired=A.D. 533. This is his only known date, and he is supposed to have reigned for twenty-five to fifty years. Both records were incised by one Govinda The Pillar (probably a *rana-stambha* or pillar erected on the battle-field) inscription describes Yasodharman as a *samrat* or universal sovereign who, dissatisfied with the limited territories of his family, conquered the whole country from the Lauhitya (Brahmaputra) to the foot of Mount Mahendra, full of palmyra trees, and from the Himalayas to the Western Ocean, and made his dominions more extensive than those of the Guptas or the Huns It records that King Mihiragula, master of the Himalayan region, who recognised only God Siva as his superior, was forced to submit to Yasodharman, whose character is portrayed in glowing colours. He was the abode of religion and the upholder of good customs; he laboured for " the benefit of mankind ", and saved the world from proud and cruel rulers who " transgressed the path of good conduct and were destitute of virtuous delights "; he was a virtuous sovereign with a praiseworthy ancestry and comparable to Manu and Bharata The second record mentions Yasodharman as a *janendra* and as the *naradhipati* (lord of men) Vishnuvardhana who raised his family with the *aulikara* (Sun—?) crest to pre eminence and who, by conquering many kings of the East and North, obtained the titles of *Rajadhiraja* and *Parameswara* His minister was Dharmadosha who worked against any intermixture of castes.

Importance of Yasodharman. There is nothing *prima facie* improbable in the imperial claims advanced by Yasodharman His decisive defeat of the Hun chief,

though distrusted by some, is founded on the evidence of a contemporary inscription and can be reconciled with the statement of Hiuen Tsang, attributing the achievement to Baladityagupta, by the reasonable supposition of an earlier and a later victories. Dr. Hoernle regards Yasodharman as the traditional Vikramaditya of Ujjain and patron of Kalidasa, but this view is generally rejected. Dr. K. P. Jayaswal identifies him with the Kalki of the *Puranas*, called Vishnuyasas, who exterminated the Huns, destroyed irreligious people and enemies of the *Dharma*, made extensive conquests, and was the benefactor of the country for twenty-five years. Therefore it is difficult to minimise the supreme importance of Yasodharman in the political, religious and social history of India; he fills the gap in imperial history between the Guptas and Harsha.

SECTION XV. THE MAUKHARIS OF KANAUJ

Isanavarman and Sarvavarman. The founder of the Maukhari dynasty, Harivarman, was followed by Adityavarman, who married the daughter of Krishna Gupta, the first member of the Gupta dynasty of Magadha. After the third ruler Isvaravarman came Isanavarman, who claims to have conquered the Andhras (*Vishnukundins*) the Sulikas (Chalukyas) and the Gaudas (Bengalis). He assumed the title of *Maharajadhiraja*, and though he defeated the Huns as well, he was finally overpowered by Kumara Gupta, the fourth Gupta of Magadha. He must have lived about 554. His son and successor, Sarvavarman, inflicted a decisive defeat on Damodara Gupta (the fifth Gupta of Magadha) and the Huns. A later inscription (612) on the banks of the Sutlej refers to a grant of land made by Sarvavarman to a local temple, and this record confirms his victory over the Huns. He was the greatest Maukhari, whose authority extended from Bengal to the Sutlej and the Vindhyas.

Avantivarman and Grahavarman The next ruler, Avantivarman, is regarded by some as the king mentioned, according to one reading, in the *Bharatavakya* (concluding benedictory stanza) of the *Mudrarakshasa*, but its author Visakhadatta is better assigned to the fifth century Avantivarman's relationship to his immediate predecessor is not known His son and successor Grahavarman married about 602 Rajyasri, the daughter of Prabhakaravardhana of Thanesar, but, after his father-in-law's death, was attacked and killed by Deva Gupta in league with Sasanka of Bengal Rajyasri was imprisoned and the duty of revenge was performed by her brothers Rajyavardhana and Harshavardhana, the latter stepping into the place of the last Maukhari, Grahavarman

Services of the Maukharis The chronology of the Maukharis is exceedingly obscure,* and their ascendancy during the latter half of the sixth century must be attributed to the death of Yasodharman of Malwa and to their attempt to keep the Huns at bay in the North West who, though weakened by Mihiragula's death, were sufficiently strong to be a disturbing element The Maukharis were stout champions of Brahmanism, performing sacrifices and encouraging Vedic studies They imitated the Peacock type of Gupta silver coins and used the Gupta era Above all they played a prominent part in crossing the path of the Guptas of Magadha towards empire and in preventing trouble from the Huns and finally paved the way for the ascendancy of the Pushyabhutis of Thanesar, under Prabhakaravardhana and his sons

SECTION XVI THE GUPTAS OF MAGADHA

The Aphsad Inscription The genealogy of the Gupta dynasty of Magadha is mostly derived from the lengthy Aphsad (near Gaya) inscription of Adityasena, whose Shahpur (near Patna) record is dated in 66 Harsha

* T G Aravamuthan *The Kaveri the Maukharis and the Sangam Age* (1925), p 105

era = 606 + 66 = 672 A.D The relationship of this line of Guptas to the imperial line is doubtful, as no such claims redounding to their prestige are advanced by the former. The founder of the dynasty, Krishna Gupta, was followed by Harsha Gupta and Jivita Gupta I. The fourth ruler, Kumara Gupta, was contemporaneous with Isanavarman Maukhari, whose date 554 is known. Therefore the first three Guptas may be assigned to the first half of the sixth century. Though Kumara Gupta defeated Isanavarman, the fortunes of his dynasty were eclipsed by the ascendancy of the Maukharis, and his successor Damodara Gupta sustained a defeat at the hands of Sarvavarman Maukhari. The sixth Gupta, Mahasena, concluded an alliance with Prabhakaravardhana and defeated Susthitavarman of Assam. Consequent on the marriage alliance between the Pushyabhutis and the Maukharis, Deva Gupta allied himself with Sasanka, and their combined attack on Grahavarman ended in the latter's premature death. But the triumph of Harshavadhana secured for him the subordination of Madhava Gupta.

SECTION XVII. THE VAKATAKAS OF BERAR

Pravarasena I and Prithvisena I. The Vakatakas dominated Berar for two centuries, expanding now and then in various directions. The name of the dynasty gives no clue to its origin, and the names of some of its members are likely to mislead rather than inform. It was exactly contemporary with the Imperial Guptas. Its history is based chiefly on inscriptions with some aid from the *Puranas*. Its fortunes were not steady in the fourth century, but its predominance was asserted in the following century. The founder of the Vakataka power was Vindhyasakti, who is glorified in the Ajanta Cave inscription though he goes without royal titles. He is identified with the Puranic Vindhyasakti. Pravarasena I (300—330; this and the following reign-periods are conjectural),

according to the Chammak (near Ellichpur, Berar) Copper Plate inscription of Pravarasena II, performed a surprisingly large number of sacrifices including four *asvamedhas*, and assumed the title of *Samrat*. He is identical with the Puranic Pravira who is described as the valiant son of Vindhyasakti and the performer of *Vaja peya* sacrifices accompanied with liberal gifts. Therefore the combined labours of Vindhyasakti and Pravarasena I must have made the Vakatakas an imperial power. The next ruler was Rudrasena I (330—340), the grandson of Pravarasena I. He gave up the title of *Samrat*, and the *Puranas* say that the dynasty of Vindhyakas (Vakatakas) came to an end after Pravira. The cause of this sudden change in the status of the Vakatakas is not known. Prithvisena I (340—390) rehabilitated his dynastic fortunes and conquered Kuntala (Western Dakhan and Northern Mysore). An inscription in Bundelkhand refers to "Vyaghradeva who meditates on the feet of the *Maharaja* of the Vakatakas, the illustrious Prithvisena". This record conveys a good idea of his extensive dominions. So far the Vakatakas were worshippers of Siva.

Regency of Prabhavati Gupta. Rudrasena II (390—395), the son and successor of Prithvisena I, was a Vaishnava. He married Prabhavati, the daughter of Chandragupta II and Kuberanaga, who after the demise of her husband became Regent for her minor son. The dominance of that Gupta emperor in the councils of the Vakatakas during the reign of Rudrasena II and the regency of Prabhavati is clear. His marriage alliance with the Vakatakas must be regarded as his preparation for the conquest of Western India.

Pravarasena II and Prithvisena II. Pravarasena II (395—420) was the successor of Rudrasena II, but we do not know when he attained majority and when his mother's regency ended. His Chammak inscription, issued from his capital, Pravarapura, was indited in his 18th regnal year, besides giving the dynastic genealogy,

it describes him as the most devout worshipper of *Mahesvara*. While he is mentioned as the *Maharaja* of the Vakatakas, the father of his mother is called the *Maharajadhiraja* Devagupta (Chandragupta II). This record proves the continuance of the latter's influence in the Vakataka Kingdom under Pravarasena II. Recent literary researches bring the grandson and the grandfather into close contact with Kalidasa, and lend credibility to Pravarasena II's authorship of the Prakrit poem; *Setubandha*. Prithvisena II (420—445) and Devasena (445—465), the grandsons of Pravarasena II, appear to have changed the pro-Gupta policy of their grandfather. The former is said to have "raised his sunken family." It is surmised that he must have co-operated with the Pushyamitras and suffered defeat along with them at the hands of Skandagupta. But the chronology adopted here does not permit such a defeat in the time of Prithvisena II. Probably the Pushyamitra trouble was aggravated by the hostility of the Vakatakas to the Gupta Empire, but nothing definite can be stated.

Harisena. The last great Vakataka was Harisena (465—500), the son of Devasena. We do not know the final date of the former; as a matter of fact, the whole of Vakataka chronology is uncertain but for the synchronism of Rudrasena II and Pravarasena II with Chandragupta II. Harisena is credited with the conquest of Kuntala (re-conquest) and of Malwa, South Kosala, Kalinga, Trikuta (North Konkan), Lata (South Gujarat) and Andhra. As regards his conquest of Trikuta, it is confirmed by the records of the Traikutakas, whose last known date is 494. He must have taken advantage of the misfortunes of the Guptas in the period of the Hun invasions and built up an empire in the Dakhan, including portions of trans-Vindhyan India. Nothing is known about his successors, and his dynasty must have been superseded by the Chalukyas about the middle of the sixth century.

Importance of the Dynasty We have already seen that the Gupta culture spread beyond the confines of the Northern Indian Empire, whose influence was more than commensurate with its limits Some of the caves and paintings of Ajanta are indebted to the Vakatakas One of their inscriptions is found there and the caves were within their dominions The last two Vakatakas through their ministers Hastibhoja and Varahadeva two Malabar Brahmans participated in the artistic progress of Ajanta The Prakrit work attributed to Pravarasena II reminds us of the traditions of the Satavahanas and his personal contact with Chandragupta II and Kalidasa makes him a conspicuous figure in literary annals The Sanskrit inscriptions of the Vakatakas—the foundation of their history—are further proof of their patronage of Sanskrit and of Gupta culture in general

SECTION XVIII THE BRIHATPHALAYANAS ANANDAS SALANKAYANAS AND VISHNUKUNDINS OF ANDHRADESA

Brihatphalayanas and Anandas The only Brihatphalayana (*gotra* name) known is Jayavarman who seems to have ruled early in the fourth century or towards the close of the previous century, and made a grant of tax free land to Brahmans in his tenth regnal year from Kuduru (near Masulipatam) which refers to him as devoted to Siva He seems to have defeated the Pallavas and been vanquished by them later The Ananda kings Damodaravarman and Attivarman, belonged to the Ananda *gotra* and may be assigned to the fourth century Their inscriptions are found in the Guntur District and they must have taken advantage of the decline of the Ikshvakus Damodaravarman was a Buddhist Attivarman worshipped Siva and made many *hiranyagarbhadanas* and *gosahasras* (two of the sixteen *mahadanas* or great gifts) The dynasty with its capital at Kandapura near Vinukonda was overthrown probably by the Salankayanas

Salankayanas. The Salankayanas (a *gotra* name) of Vengi may be assigned to the fourth and fifth centuries. The first king, Devavarman, is described as an *asvamedha-yaji* or one who has performed the horse-sacrifice. The next ruler, Hastivarman, was one of those defeated and reinstated by Samudragupta. After Nandivarman I and Chandavarman came Nandivarman II, who was a Vaishnava, whereas his predecessors were Saivas who inscribed Siva's bull on their seals. His inscriptions contain some details about his administration. The last king, Skandavarman, was a Saiva who venerated the sacred bull. The Salankayanas were superseded by the Vishnukundins.

Vishnukundins. The genealogy and chronology of the Vishnukundin dynasty are by no means definitely settled; *vide* the latest scheme.* The dynastic name may be connected with *Vishnukundinagara* or Vinukonda (Guntur Dt.). The Vishnukundins were worshippers of Mallikarjuna (Siva) at Srisailam (Kurnool Dt.); they may be assigned to the *fifth* and *sixth centuries* A.D. The first member of the dynasty was Madhavavarman I, who married a Vakataka princess and performed innumerable sacrifices including eleven *asvamedhas*. Mr. D. C. Sircar observes: "No one except a fanatic can be expected to perform an *asvamedha* sacrifice and expose his wives to such indecent and obnoxious practices as are necessary in the performance of this sacrifice."† We do not know whether such practices, though prescribed in the Vedic texts, were actually followed, particularly by Madhavavarman, who performed that sacrifice eleven times. He was followed by Devavarman, Madhavavarman II, Vikramedravarman I, Indrabhattarakavarman and Vikramendravarman II. Govindavarman was pro-

* B. V. Krishna Rao, *Early Dynasties of Andhradesa* (1942), p. 41.

† *Journal of the Department of Letters*, Calcutta University, XXVI, p. 111.

bably the Vishnukundin defeated by Isanavarman Maukhari in the first half of the sixth century Madhavavarman III belonged to the latter half of that century, performed eleven *asvamedhas* and numerous other sacrifices and many *mahadanas*, and shone with the title of *janasraya* or refuge of the people He married a princess of Mahakosala He appears to have reduced Kalinga to vassalage In the administration of justice he employed many forms of ordeal The Vishnukundins were overthrown by Pulakesin II Chalukya in 611

SECTION XIX THE KADAMBAS OF BANAVASI

Origin and Chronology The successors of the Satavahanas in Kuntala were the Chutus, who called themselves Satavahanas and were displaced by the Pallavas The historical origin of the Kadambas is given in the Talagunda (Shimoga District Mysore) Pillar inscription of Kakutsthavarman (430—450), the fifth Kadamba sovereign Though the genealogy of the dynasty is well established its chronology is worked backwards from the known contemporaneity of some later Kadambas with the Western Gangas and the Western Chalukyas, it is presumed from the data of the Pillar inscription that the founder of the dynasty, Mayurasarman was the contemporary of Samudragupta Another inscription of Kakutsthavarman is dated in the 80th year, and it is supposed that the reference is to the Kadamba era The ancient or early Kadamba dynasty consisted of 13 rulers who may be assigned to the period 345—610 *

The Talagunda Pillar Inscription The Pillar inscription is a posthumous record of Kakutsthavarman put up by his son Santivarman It is a lengthy document of basic importance for Kadamba history Its contents may be summarised as follows The Kadamba family was of orthodox Brahman extraction the members of which devoted themselves to religious study and sacrifices A

* G M Moraes *The Kadamba Kula* (1931) *vide* genealogical table before p 15

adamba tree grew near their house, and hence they were called Kadambas. Mayurasarman (345—370) went to Kanchi, the Pallava capital, to complete his Vedic studies, but in consequence of a quarrel with a Pallava *asva-samstha** or mounted spy, he resolved to pursue a martial career; in the language of the inscription, " with the hand dexterous in grasping the *kusa* grass, the fuel, the stones, the ladle, the melted butter and the oblation vessel, he unsheathed a flaming sword, eager to conquer the earth." He defeated the frontier army of the Pallavas and carved out a kingdom for himself. The Pallavas of Kanchi, failing to put him down, came to terms with him, and recognised him as ruler of the territory bounded by the Western sea. This account shows that Mayurasarman exploited the political confusion in South India resulting from Samudragupta's invasion and became the independent ruler of Banavasi (the capital, on the Varada, tributary of the Tungabhadra; the kingdom = Shimoga District). The inscription gives the names of his successors and praises them in the conventional manner; Kangavarman (370—395), Bhagiratha (395—420), and his two sons, Raghu (420—430) and Kakutsthavarman (430—450). One important detail mentioned in the record is that Kakutstha married his daughters to the Gupta princes and others (Vakatakas). These would be *pratiloma* marriages as the Guptas are supposed to be Vaisyas and as the Kadambas were Brahmans. He constructed a reservoir for the Siva temple at Talagunda visited by " Satakarni and others pious kings."

Dynastic History. Mayurasarman and Kakutsthavarman were the great makers of Kadamba history. The former's extensive conquests are indicated in his Chandravalli inscription. Kangavarman or Skandavarman must have been defeated by Prithvisena I Vakataka. Probably Bhagiratha was the ruler of Kuntala to whom an embassy led by Kalidasa was sent by Chandragupta II.

* Sathianathaier, *Studies*, pp. 49-50.

After the death of Santivarman (450—475), the Kadamba kingdom was divided between the two branches of the dynasty Mrigesavarman (475—490) is said to have conquered the Gangas and the Pallavas, he was favourably disposed towards Jainism Ravivarman (497—537), the successor of Mandhatrivarman (490—497), had to fight for the throne He was a distinguished and popular ruler, and enjoyed a long reign Harivarman (537—547) was different from his great father, and his weakness intensified the quarrel between the two royal branches Further, Pulakesin I Chalukya, a feudatory of Harivarman, revolted and established his dynasty at Badami The elder branch ended with Harivarman Krishna varman II (547—565) of the younger branch strengthened himself by marrying his sister to a Ganga prince Ajavarman (565—606) became subordinate to the Chalukyas Bhogivarman (606—640) attempted in vain to re-establish the independence of his dynasty The Kadambas probably introduced the cup shaped "padma tankas" There was a revival of Kadamba power towards the close of the tenth century, the more important of the later dynasties ruled over Hangal (Dharwar District) and Goa, and their power became extinct in the fourteenth century with the rise of Vijayanagar

SECTION XX THE WESTERN GANGAS OF TALAKAD

Madhava and Harivarma. There are two dynasties of Gangas, the main branch holding sway from the fourth to the eleventh century in Mysore, called the Western Gangas, and the other branch in Orissa referred to as the Eastern Gangas The Western Ganga dominion, named Gangavadi (why, we do not know), embraced most of Mysore The circumstances of its origin as retailed in later inscriptions are worthless for historical purposes, the Gangas claim to belong to the Ikshavaku family The dynasty consisted of twenty five rulers most of them

origin is one connecting them with the Vakatakas; another regards them as of Chola-Sinhalese origin.* But the author thinks that the Pallavas belonged to Tondamandalam itself, that they were the Paladas or Pulindas of Asoka's inscriptions, and that they became prominent on the decline of the Satavahanas.

Sivaskandavarman. The history of the Pallavas from the fourth to the sixth century is not so obscure as that of the Cholas and the Pandyas during the same period, but their genealogy and chronology are to a large extent indefinite. Two Pallava dynasties are distinguished—one issuing their grants in Prakrit and the other in Sanskrit. Sivaskandavarman and Vijayaskandavarman belonged to the first line and may be assigned to the first half of the fourth century. Bappa, the predecessor of Sivaskanda, lived probably towards the close of the previous century, and we do not know whether he was the founder of the Pallava power at Kanchi, or some one before him. Sivaskandavarman is known from his two undated Prakrit copper plate grants at Mayidavolu (Guntur District) and Hirahadagalli (Bellary District), both issued from Kanchi, and seems to have been the ablest of the early Pallavas. Under him the kingdom of Kanchi extended from the Krishna to the South Pennar, including the Bellary District. He assumed the title of *Dharmamaharaja* and performed the *asvamedha* and other sacrifices. His inscriptions show that his administration was well organised in conformity with the Maurya system, as modified in the period, second century B.C. to third century A.D. His successor, Vijayaskandavarman, is known from his queen Charudevi's British Museum Plates (*originally belonging to the Guntur District*), a grant in Prakrit, with impreeatory verses in Sanskrit—the first Pallava gift to temples. He was followed by Buddhyankura.

* R. Gopalan, *History of the Pallavas of Kanchi* (1928), *pp. 15-26; B. V. Krishna Rao, op. cit., pp. 146-45.*

Vishnugopa The dynasty of the Sanskrit charters may be assigned to the period, 350 to 550 Vishnugopa was the ruler defeated by Samudragupta after whose departure from South India a period of stress and storm set in There are various genealogical lists given in the charters, issued from places other than Kanchi The names of more than sixteen kings are available It is surmised by some scholars that the Pallavas lost Kanchi and withdrew to the region of Nellore Even the capture of Kanchi by Karikala Chola is postulated but this theory is to be rejected in the light of the chronology of the Sangam age we have adopted All this political confusion was due to the Kalabhra invasion of the Tamil land In spite of the uncertainties of Pallava genealogy during this period the following princes may be taken to have ruled Simhavarman I Skandavarman I Virakurcha Skanda varman II Kumaravishnu I Buddhavarman Kumara vishnu II Simhavarman II Vishnugopa and Skanda varman III These names suggest that Saivism Vaishna vism and Buddhism claimed adherents among the kings of the Sanskrit charters

Simhavishnu (c 575—c 600) Simhavishnu the son of Simhavarman is regarded as belonging to a third Pallava dynasty whose inscriptions are on stone There is no clear necessity to speak of three lines of kings according as their documents are copper plate inscriptions in Prakrit or Sanskrit or lithic records The *gotra* of all the dynasties is the same and the names of their members do not justify any separation Moreover the Vayalur Pillar inscription of Rajasimha gives a consoli dated list of the Pallavas without dynastic differentiation There are other records of some members of the so called Simhavishnu dynasty claiming some of those of the so-called dynasty of the Sanskrit charters as their ancestors With Simhavishnu begins the period of the great Pallavas and genealogical and chronological questions upset us no longer His kingdom stretched from Madras to the Kaveri he conquered the Chola country He claims